

1873 Edward Taylor
2 Parts

A N
EXPOSITION
Of the five first
CHAPTERS
OF THE PROPHET
EZEKIE,
WITH
USEFUL OBSERVATIONS
THEREUPON.

Delivered in several **LECTURES** in *London,*
By **WILLIAM GREENHILL.**

The second Edition, corrected and amended.

Matth. 13. 11.

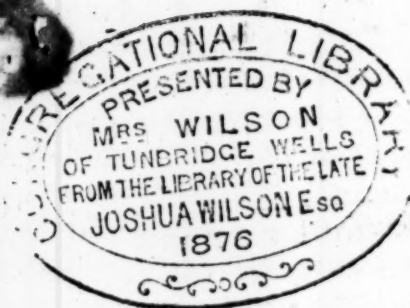
To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom.

Θεωρίας ἀπ' ἑσῶν καὶ καρμμένης διανοίας συνέμασι γινώσκω ἐν
αὐτοῖς, Nyssen.

Ama scripturas sanctas, & amabit te sapientia, Jerom.

L O N D O N;

Printed by *M. Simmons* for *Hanna Allen*, and are to
be sold at her Shop, at the sign of the Crown in
Popehead-Alley, 1649.






TO THE
EXCELLENT PRINCESSE,

And most hopefull Lady,

THE PRINCESSE *ELIZABETH*,
HER HIGHNESSE.

May it please your Highnesse;

OLOMON, the wisest of
Princes, counsels us to
remember our *Creator* in
the dayes of our youth;
it's a great Vertue to be
mindfull of God timely : *Timothy*
from a childe knew the holy Scrip-
tures: *Josiah* that good Prince, while
he was yet young, or tender, (as the
Hebrew bears it) began to seek after
the Lord, he did that which was right
in his sight, he walked in the wayes

והוא עורנו
נצח החל
לדרוש
לאלה
רויך
2 Chron. 34. 3.

THE EPISTLE

² King. 22.2 of *David*, he turned not aside, to the right hand or left. The Lord takes speciall notice when young ones are mindfull of him : the childrens crying *Hosanna*, is recorded in the Gospel ; children walking in the truth, is observed by *John*, and the Lord minded the good was found in the childe of *Feroboam* : doubtlesse Gods eye is upon your Highnesse, for that good is found in you in these your tender yeers, and is well pleased, that your sweetness of nature, & choiceness of wit, are joyn'd with desire to know him, with love to his Worship, affection to the godly, and delight in such sentences as these are,
viz.

Χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ πάντοτε, πάλιν ἰδοὺ χαίρετε.

Deus meus & omnia.

Lamia Grandezza dal Eccelfo.

All

D E D I C A T O R Y.

All which with these precious speeches of yours, *I had rather be a begger here, then not goe to heaven, and how shall I be sure to goe to heaven?* are acceptable to the Highest, and make strong impressions upon us inferiours: Your desire to know the Originall, Tongues, that you may understand the Scripture the better, your resolution to write them out with your own Princely hand, & to come to the perfect knowledge of them, breed in us hopes that you will exceed all of your Sex, and be without equall in *Europe*, as *Drusius* said of his son, who at five yeers learned Hebrew, and at twelve writ it *extempore*, both in prose and verse. Encouraging instances your own Sex will afford; *Eustochium* profited so much in the Latine, Hebrew, and Greek, that in her time shee was called

THE EPISTLE

called the wonder of the world *Istria* Queen of the *Scythians* so excelled in Greek, that she taught her sonnes the Greek tongue. *Zenobia* Queen of the *Palmirenians*, was skild in the Latine, Egyptian and Greek tongues, she read the *Roman* Story in Greek, abridged the *Alexandrian*, and all the Orientall histories. *Politian* hath an Epistle to *Cassandra*, a Venetian maid, whom he calls the glory of *Italy*, her delight was not in wool, but books, not in the spindle, or needle, but in the pen, not in paint, but in ink; she writ Epistles and Orations to admiration, she exceld in Logick and Philosophy, and had such perfections, as caused the learned to admire, if not adore her. Queen *Elizabeth* was so learned, that she read every Author in the originall, and answered Ambassadors of most Nations
in

DEDICATORY.

in their own language, she went twice to *Oxford*, and once to *Cambridge*, purposely to hear the learned Academi-
call disputations, where her self made
Latine Orations; she translated *Salust*,
and writ a Century of Sentences; she
set apart some houres daily to read,
or hear others read to her; she so ex-
celd in learning & wisdom, that her
teachers rather learned of her, then
brought learning to her. Your High-
nesse seems to aim at all the excellen-
cies in the pre-mentioned: for your
writing out the LORDS Prayer in
Greek, some texts of Scripture in He-
brew, your endeavour after the exact
knowledge of those holy Tongues,
with other languages and learned ac-
complishments, your diligent hearing
of the Word, carefull noting of Ser-
mons, understanding answers at the

A

cate-

THE EPISTLE, &c.

catechising, and frequent questioning about holy things, doe promise great matters from you. If the harvest be answerable to the spring, your *Higness* will be the wonder of the learned, & glory of the godly. It is my unhappiness that I cannot be sufficiently adjuvant to such Princely beginnings; yet because this following Treatise is an exposition of Scripture, I take the boldnesse to present it to your *Higness*, and shall continue to pray to him who is *All*, and able to give *All*, that he would preserve your Royall person, blesse your hopefull Endeavours, fill you with all divine perfections, make you a chiefe praise in *Israel*, & fit you for an eternal weight of glory.

Your Hignesse most humble servant,

WILLIAM GREENHILL.



To all Wel-willers of
T R U T H,

Especially to the *Authours* and
Fauntors of the Expository Lectures
in this Citie.



*I*n most Arts and Sci-
ences are difficulties,
in Divinity are depths;
Plato, Aristotle, Eu-
clid, have their nodos,
and the Scriptures have
their *duobinta*, in them are dark sayings,
Psal. 78.2. Riddles, Ezek. 17.2. Para-
bles, Matth. 13 35. Wonders, Psal.

To all Wel-willers

119. 18. great things, *Hof. 8. 12.* things hard to be uttered, *Heb 5. 12.* hard to be understood, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* My-
steries, *Matth. 13. 11.* hidden and manifold Wisdom, *1 Cor. 2. 7. Ephes. 3. 10.* the deep things of God, *1 Cor. 2. 10.* *Much is in it that God hath intermixt the holy Scriptures with some difficulties. Hereby we are led up to conceive there be infinite depths in God, which eternity must take us up to study. They convince us of our incapacity of high things, Joh. 16. 12. They prevent our undervaluing of Divine Truth: flesh and blood is very apt upon reading, and apprehension of easinesse to lay aside choice Workes; God hath therefore hid some truths under the rocks, laid them deepe, that so there might be digging and searching, as for treasures. Difficulties quicken and whet*
endea-

ἀνεγνώσκοντες
καὶ τὴν γλῶσσαν

cf T R U T H.

endeavours, sloath is a great gulf which hinders men from coming at the truth, and it made the Father feare, lest thereby the Lords Book should not onely be shut, but also sealed up. Ingenuous spirits, when they heare of hard things, stirre lively, and what they get by sorest labour, is most precious. The rocky and knotty things in the Prophets and Apostles, suffice to exercise the greatest abilities and graces which are seated in humane nature; they keepe mens thoughts from swelling into a conceit of omniscieny; they make us long to be where wee shall know as wee are known, 1 Cor. 13. 12. and in the mean time, to pray with David, Open thou our eyes, that wee may see the wonders of thy Law: hard things drave David to the Lord, he knew, that without God he could not understand the things of God,
whose

Ego vereor
ne perniti-
am negli-
gentiam et
stolidita-
tem cordis
non solum
velata sint
nobis divi-
na volumi-
na, sed eri-
am signata
Origen.

In Verbo
Dei abund-
dat quod
perfectus
comedat,
& quod
parvulus
sugat, *Fulg.*

Sine Deo,
impollibile
est discere
Deum, *Ire 1.*

To all Wel-willers

whose glory it is, both to conceale and
reveale a thing, Prov. 25. 2. Mat. 16.
17. Many have sued to God for further
discovery of his minde, and have attemp-
ted to help us in Scripture difficulties:
but all dark things are not yet cleared,
nor all depths yet sounded; To this day
a vaile is upon the heart of the Jewes in
reading the old Testament, 2 Cor. 3. 14,
15. and surely, the vaile is not fully re-
moved from the hearts of us Christians,
wee have seene very dimly into sundry
things, not onely of Paul, Peter and
John, but of Moses and the Prophets,
especially of this Prophet Ezekiel,
who hath therefore been past over, both
by Writers and Readers, as dark, dif-
ficult, and lesse usefull. Robert Ste-
phen mentions one, and that a Sarbo-
nist, who had liv'd above fiftie yeares,
and knew not what the new Testament
meant;

Respons.
ad censu.
Theol. Paris.
in præf.

of T R U T H.

meant; and have not sundry persons among us, lived their fifty yeeres, and not known what Ezekiel meant? Hath he not been a Book clasped and sealed unto them? If this Hieroglyphicall Prophet have been a wonder to all for his Visions, yet he hath been known to few, by reason of the abstrusenesse of his Visions, which have kept off great Rabbies from imploying their talents to open them. If weaknesse and error be found in these poore labours of mine, I intreat you to remember, I have been among propheticall deepes and difficulties, which may plead for him who knowing his own insufficiencies, came in vita Minerva to this task. If any light appeare for the better understanding of these enigmaticall things; I must say with Daniel, There is a God in Heaven which revealeth mysteries, to him be all the glory.

Dan. 2.

My

To all Wel-willers of TRUTH.

*My prayers shall be to him inlightneth
every man which cometh into the world,
that he would anoint your eyes with eye-
salve, whereby you may daily see more in-
to the great and glorious truths of God,
and those things which may strongly
make for your eternall peace and comfort.
So prayeth*

Your Friend and Servant

in the Lord,

W. G.

THE

The Introduction to the VVork.



ALL Scripture being the breath of Gods Spirit, 2 Pet. 1. 21. 2 Tim. 3. 16. none can be Judge or Expounder of it but the same Spirit. Men are only Indices veritatis, they cannot bring a sense, but shew you what is the sense of Scripture. These are called to be Expositors, must not fetch senses ab extra, but take what is in the bowels of the Text, and hold forth unto others. A work which requires abilitie, wisdom, diligence, and faithfulness: Abilitie to inquire into the Originalls: wisdom to compare Scriptures, consider circumstances, and to discern the verity, spirituality, and proprietic of Texts; and Phrases; diligence to dig and search after truth, which lieth deep, and hid; faithfulness to give out truths being found, with their own lustre, not humane tincture. Whosoever doth thus, shall purchase favour in Heaven, and esteem on earth. Expository work is ancient and honourable; Ancient as Nehemiahs time Chap. 8. 8. the Levites gave the sense of the Law, they expounded it. In those dayes the Jewes had their Perushim, Interpreters, which was above five hundred yeers before Christ: what wayes they interpreted Scripture, you may reade in Shindl. Pentagl. page 1491. and in Weems his Christian Synagogue, 2 Book, chap. 1. pag 221. It is also Honourable; for the Lord Christ was an Expositor, Mark. 4. 34. hee expounded

Helvici.

ἐκάλυψε.
διηρώτησε
διηρώτη
ἐξήρῳ.

pounded all things, Luke 24. 27. hee interpreted; and
vers. 32. he opened the Scriptures. Paul also was an Ex-
positor, Acts 28. 23. he expounded. This work being so
ancient and honourable, let it finde the more acceptance
with you.

Some would have Expositors only give the literall sense
without observation or application of any thing: if all peo-
ple could prophesie, were skilfull in Scriptures, as Ezra, migh-
tie, as Apollo, I could like it. But because many truths
lie so deep, and so closely couch'd, as all cannot easily discern
or extract them, it is necessary to give the sense, and draw
forth points observable, yet with a brevis perspicuitie and
a perspicuous brevitie. The literall sense may be strong meat
for some, when observations may bee milk for others. That
course shall I take, and so I come to the Title.

THE



The Antiquitie, Scope and Occasion of Writing, Nature, Benefit and Parts of this Prophecie handled in the Title.

The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.



Ew of the other sacred Books have this Title in the originall prefixed. The word *Sepbar*, a Book, signifieth any writing; be it great or small, short or long, it hath this name in the Hebrew language, *Jer. 3. 8.* a Bill of divorce is mentioned; the word in the originall is *Sepbar*, a Book of Divorce. It was the use of the *Jews* to call any Writing, though it had but a few lines in it, *Sepbar*, a Book. And so a Catalogue that had not many names in it, is called a Book, *Mat. 1. 1.* The Book (or, the catalogue) of the Generation of Jesus Christ.

ספ

This Book of *Ezekiel* is large, having eight and fourty Chapters in it, and may rather be called a Volume, then *Sepbar*, a Book, a Bill, a Catalogue. Some Books in the Scripture that are far less then this of *Ezekiel* have that Title. *Esther* which is not long, hath this title, *Megillath Esther*, the Volume of *Esther*, or the Book of *Esther*, so it is in your Bible. The word cometh from *Galal*, which signifieth to roll or fold up, for the use of the *Jews* was to fold up their Writings, as being the best way to preserve them from dust and other dangers. These two words are sometimes found both together, as in this Prophet, *Chap. 2 v. 9.* There was sent unto the Prophet a hand, and in it there was *Megillath Sepbar*, a roll of a Book.

גל

The *Jews* had many *Megillaths*, many such volumes or rolls, especially five, which they did use at severall times.

There was the *Megillath* of the *Canticles*, which they read at

the Feast of the Passeeover, because it contained much of the love of God to the Church, and in the Passeeover they apprehended much of Gods love towards them.

2. Then they had the *Megillath of Ruth*, which was read at the Feast of Pentecost, because it contained the genealogie and original of *David* their King, who was so beloved and dear unto them.

3. They had the *Megillath of Ecclesiastes*, and that they read at the Feast of Tabernacles, in memory of Gods protection of them forty yeers in the Wilderness, because that volume did contain in it many acts of Gods providence, which watcheth over his people continually.

The fourth was the *Megillath of Esther*, which was read in the moneth of *Adar*, because that discovered the plot of *Haman*, and the goodness of God that did deliver them from that imminent danger.

The last *Megillath* was the Book of the *Lamentations*, and this contained, as the summe, so the bewailing of the *Babylonish* captivity, which was grievous unto them. This Book they read in the fifth Moneth which was answerable to the latter end of *July*.

These were all little books, little volumes, *Ezekiel* is rather a *Megillath*, and *Ezekiel* must be our volume, a book written in the *Babylonish* captivitie, some five hundred and fourscore yeers before *Christ*; so that it is above two thousand two hundred yeers since this book was written. From hence you may observe:

First, the wisdom of God in causing this and other books to be written. A book is a writing, the originall word signifieth to write. Here is the wisdom and goodness of God, that the prophecies of *Ezekiel* & other prophets should be written. God will have his Church furnished with, and regulated by written truths, not unwritten traditions: The *Jewes* they had their *Cabbala*, which they say were full of secret Mysteries. The *Papists* they have their Traditions, they call them unwritten verities, and we call them unwritten vanities. We have a sure word of Prophecie to stick unto, and they uncertain fancies, which corrupt the worship of God, and indanger immortall souls. *Bellarmino* hath a whole Book *de Verbo Dei non scripto*, of the Word of God unwritten; such words of God wee acknowledge not. It was the wisdom of God that the Prophets should write, & that their writings should be extant.

When

When the Lawyer asked Christ what he should do to inherit eternall life, Christ doth not send him to unwritten Traditions, or to Jewish Cabbala's, but he sends him to a known and written Law, *What is written in the Law? how readeſt thou?* So wee must Luke 10. 26. look to what is written, and how we may read, not what they tell us was revealed to such a Saint, and hath continued to so many generations, and is the truth of God: these are delusions. The writings of the Prophets and Apostles are sufficient for us; and we acknowledge the infinite goodness of God, in that these should be written for us to have resort unto. If this Prophets, others, and Apostles works had not been written, there would have been great inconveniences, some things would have bin forgotten; some neglected, many things corrupted, and all things in time questioned, and so the whole truth would have been without authority in the hearts of people.

Secondly, see here the providence of God likewise, in preserving this Book of *Ezekiel*; which was written in *Babylon*, for there was the Prophet, and there he had his visions: for a Book to be preserved in *Babylon*, is a wonder. The Law was lost in *Sion*, in *Manasses* his dayes, and found again in *Josiah* his time: If the Law may be lost in *Sion*, much more may a Prophecie be lost in *Babylon*; and if not lost in *Babylon*, yet it might have been left in *Babylon*; if not left there, it might have miscarried in their return; if not then, yet when *Titus* and *Vespasian* took, and sacked *Jerusalem*, it might there have perished, and been utterly extinguished; and we never have heard of this Prophecie of *Ezekiel*. But here is the hand of God manifested in it, that though this Prophecie were revealed to *Ezekiel* in *Babylon*, and run through so many hazards, yet it should be preserved to this very day.

Again, see where is the true antiquity: This book was written five hundred and fourscore yeeres before Christ, two thousand two hundred yeeres ago, and is not this book now very ancient? other Prophets, and the whole Scripture are the true Antiquity. Papiſts, and many amongst us stand upon antiquitie, and what is their antiquitie? The Fathers, or some Heathen Writers are their antiquitie. But what is the true antiquitie but the Word of God? That is *Prima veritas*, and *pura veritas*, the first truth, and the pure truth, that is the fountain, all other are but muddy.

Jer. 2. 13.

muddy channels. When any points are in controversie they flie to Fathers and to Antiquitie, and what is found there they take for truth; but this is to desert God, and run to man. *My people have forsaken me the fountaine of living waters, and bewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.* I am the fountaine, saith God, my Scriptures are the fountain of living waters, yet they run to their own pits and cisterns that hold no water. Some moth-eaten and old writings, some ancient copies that have lain hid some hundreds of yeers from the world; are brought forth, & obtruded upon people for truths, and they must be truths. But for your direction know, that if they be not in the Kings Records, what ever writings they be, never regard them: and if you will search, never search into inferiour Courts, search not Books that are on this side the Kings Court, that are made of late; but go to the King of heavens Records, have recourse to his Court, look into the Law of God; *To the Law and to the Testimonie, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them,* throw them by, that truth which is found in any writings, and not to be drawn out of Gods Book, is not from antiquitie, these are the true Records, here is the true antiquitie; and so much for this word Book; The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.

Jsa. 8. 20.

לחזק
קראתו קורא.

Ezekiel, that is the name of our Prophet. Among the Jewes there were no Sir-names, but every man had only one name, as *Sauuel, David, Isaiab, Jeremie, Ezekiel, &c.* This name Ezekiel doth signifie the strength of God, or, *one strengthened by God*: Hee had a great work to doe, he needed great strength for that work. He was to deal with wicked Princes, & wretched people, such as were exceeding opposite, desperately wicked, impudent, hard-hearted, rebellious. Therefore Chap. 3. v. 8, 9. *Behold (saith God) I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy fore-head strong against their fore-heads; &c.* The Hebrew words here for strong, are *Chazakim* and *Chazak*, I have made thy faces *Chazakim*, strong, I have gi'en thee many faces, and I have given thee many strengths, strong both in the singular and plurall number, all the strengths that is fit for a Prophet that had such a great task to undertake and goe about. He was to reprove them for their sins, to threaten Gods judgements, to vindicate Gods justice in bringing them into captivitie, himselfe was to endure much

חזק
חזק.

much hardship, and many conflicts, for which, ordinarie strength would not suffice: therefore he is fitly called *Ezekiel*, the strength of God, or a man strengthened of God.

Or thus: *Ezekiel* doth signifie one girt of God: for *Chazack* Cingere, vincire is to gird or bind, and *Ezekiel* is one whom God hath girt and bound up for some employment: answerable to that expression of *Paul*, *Behold* (saith he) *I goe bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem*, so you read it; but it may be, bound to the Spirit; the Spirit of God goes before me; and I being bound to the guidance of the Spirit, doe follow the same whithersoever it leads me. So Acts 20. 22. δεσμιον εν τω πνευματι here, our Prophet was girt up of God from the World, bound in or to the Spirit, and so followed that, which way soever it led him.

Touching this name of *Ezekiel*, you may observe a note or two.

First, see the wisdom of God in giving names futable to the events that doe follow and fall out afterward. *Ezekiel* was to deal with a stubborn people, a rebellious house, that did oppose Heaven, that did stand it out against God to the uttermost. There was need therefore of a strong Prophet to subdue their rebellious spirits. If an ordinarie man had come, hee would soon have been discouraged, his spirit would have sunk and fallen within him; therefore here the Lord ordereth it so, that a name shall be given unto him which shall be futable to the event, he shall be a man of God, he shall be strong, strengthened, girt up of God, to deal with a proud, rebellious, obstinate people.

You may find in Scripture divers names that have been imposed through the wisdom and guidance of God upon parties before their birth, and the event hath answered afterward very fully: as *Gen. 17. Thou shalt call his name Isaac*. *Isaac* signifieth laughter, and *Isaac* proved matter of laughter to his father and mother, all their daies, he was a dutifull son, you never read that *Isaac* fell into such sinnes as some other of the Patriarks and Prophets fell into. He was a child of laughter to them. So *1 Chron. 22. 9. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his daies*: and the event was answerable to his name So *Josiah*, *1 Kings 13. 2. it signifies the fire of the Lord*, and *Josiah* was the fire of God indeed to make a reformation, to pull

pull down *Jeroboams* Altar, and to offer upon it the Priests of the high places that had burnt incense upon it, to burn mens bones thereon, to throw out Idolatry, and to destroy the high places. So the name of our blessed Saviour which was imposed before his birth, *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, They shall call his name Emanuel*, he shall save his people, he shall be God with us, and it was so, *Luke 1. Call his name John. John* noteth Gracious, and he was gracious in the eyes of his very enemies, he had favour in the eyes of *Herod*, favour in the eyes of the people. Gods wisdom is seen in ordering of names before-hand, suitable to events that follow afterward.

2. This should direct parents to impose encouraging names upon their children. What encouragement was it to *Ezekiel* to think of his name, the strength of God, a man girt up of God for some great design and imployment? Names at first were imposed for distinctions sake, and not only so, but to shew the hopes and desires of Parents touching their children for the time to come; Good names were prognosticall, Parents expected, and children were encouraged much by them: *Leah* nameth her son *Judab*, which is praise, that the might praise God for him, and he might doe things worthy of praise all his daies, and the Tribe of *Judab* did worthily in *Israel*.

Thus much from the name of *Ezekiel*.

The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.

This word *Prophet*, is not in the Hebrew. The book *Ezekiel*, or the book of *Ezekiel*: But it is in the body of the Prophecie, *Chap. 2. verse 6. They shall know that there hath been a Prophet among them.* *Prophet* is from the Greek word, and it signifies one that foretels things to come. The Hebrew word *Nabi* of *Naba*, which signifies to fore-know, fore-tell, or discover things. Some derive it from a root, which signifieth to bud, to bring forth: for as a tree draws sap from the earth, sends forth that sap into leaves and fruit, becomes profitable and serviceable unto man; so doth the Prophet, he draws sap from the root, which is God, from him he hath many hidden, deep, and divine truths, which he reveals and sends forth for the delight and benefit of others.

Prophets were of two sorts, distinguished by the Temples; some were *Propheta priores*, and others *Propheta posteriores*. The former

Ob virtutis au-
spicium imponun-
tur vocabula.
Jeron.

Προφήτης.
נביא
נביא

Prophets were those of the first Temple, the latter Prophets were those of the latter Temple, and they were Haggai, Zachariab, Nehemiab, Ezra, and Malachi; these Prophets continued but fortie yeeres after the second Temple was built, and then did Prophecie depart from Israel, which was the saddest blow one of them, that ever Israel had. All the rest were Prophets of the first Temple, and among them was our Prophet Ezekiel and Daniel, though they were in the captivitie; for the first Temple was not yet destroyed, and they had lived at Jerusalem among the Prophets: and the Prophets of the former Temple (it is observed) had the largest visions, and the fullest discoveries of the minde of God, more was discovered in the first Temple then in the second, till Christ his comming: for the second Temple had Prophets but fortie yeeres after it was built, and the first Temple had Prophets for four hundred and thirty yeeres.

Transiit prophetia ab Israele, Shind.

The Prophets (to speak for the honour of this our Prophet) were all honourable men, men of great esteem and worth, they were men of God, as it is said, 1 Kings 17. 24. *I know thou art a man of God, Ish Elohim*, a man of Gods, a man of God the Father, a man of God the Son, a man of God the Holy Ghost, hee had to do with all, a man of Gods counsell, a man of Gods protection, a man of Gods countenancing, a man of God that stood for God, a man of God that would plead the cause of God in the corruptest times, against the desperatest enemies. A Prophet was a man of God.

That they were very honourable, you shall find by that passage, 1 Sam. 10, 11. *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* It is a Proverbiall speech, and noteth a thing that is very rare and unusuall; What, is Saul that was a man of mean condition, Saul that was erewhile seeking his fathers Asses; is Saul now come to so high and honourable a condition, as to be among the Prophets? This was matter of wonder. The Prophets they were so honourable, and in so high an esteem, that it was counted a strange thing for any to come to that dignity & preferment, that were not of the Prophetical race, the tribe of Levi, or such as were in order to those holy functions.

They were likewise men priviledged, Psal. 105. 15. *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harme*; Anointed is the same with Prophet, as Expositors observe, though it is carried other-
C
wise

wife in the generall apprehension of men for Kings, but anointed here, is the same with Prophet: They were anointed when the Holy Ghost was given unto them, and they were called unto their Office; this was their anointing of God, and they must not be touched nor harmed. *Gen. 20. 7.* saith God to *Abimelech*, Give the man his wife, for he is a Prophet; hee is an honourable man, he is a man of high account in mine eyes. Princes must not wrong a Prophet, God spake to a Prince, Give him his wife, for he is a Prophet; the greatest person in the world should not dare to touch a Prophet that is a man so honourable, a man of God, and so gifted, and sent of him to such great employments.

עַר הַנָּאֵחַ
נָאֵחַ

Further, a Prophet was called in Scripture a Seer, *1 Sam. 9. 9.* Let us go to the Seer, for he is now called a Prophet that was before time called a Seer; that is, from the Hebrew word to see, and not barely to see, but to see exactly, curiously, throughly into things. The Prophets saw through the clouds, they saw into the heavens, they saw into the very counsell of God, *Isai. 30. 10.* Which say to the Seers, See not; you see too much, the meaning is, you see too accurately, why do you see so, and tell us such things? So *Abraham* he was a Prophet, you heard before, he was likewise a Seer, *Job. 8. 56.* *Abraham* rejoiced to see my day; he saw it distinctly, he saw it so as it affected him, he saw it and was glad.

חֹזֶה

There is, besides this word, another name in the Hebrew, which the Prophets had, and that was *Chōzeh*, *Isai. 30. 10.* That say to the Prophets, Prophecie not, the Hebrew is *La chozim*, to those that foresee, and foretell things: you have a conjuncture of these three in one verse, *1 Chron. 29. 29.* They are written in the book of *Samuel*, *Harioch*, the Seer, and in the book of *Nathan Hannabi* the Prophet, and in the book of *Gad*, *Hachozeh* the Seer. The word cometh of *Chazab* to contemplate, to see; from which root comes our English word to gaze, and so it is interpreted, *Isa. 47. 13.* Star-gazers; this only by the way.

וַאֲרָא
מִרְוֶה

Our Prophet had the honour to be a Seer as well as a Prophet, therefore *vers. 1.* it is said, *I saw visions, I had the honour to see visions, and visions of a God.*

Occuli Ecclesie.

These titles of Seer and Prophet, as they set out the dignitie, so likewise they point out the duty of the person. As they were Seers, they were the eyes of the Church, to see good coming, or evill, that

that they might encourage them upon the one, and draw them to repentance upon the other. As they were *Prophets* they were *os Domini*, the mouth of the Lord, to speak to the people: whatsoever the Lord himself did make known to them.

All this then doth but serve to breed in you an honourable esteem of this our *Prophet*; he is a man of God; he is a man honourable among the rest of the *Prophets*; he is a *Scer*; he is the eye of the Church; he is the mouth of God.

Having thus opened unto you the Title, I shall now shew to you;

1. The scope and occasion of this *Prophet*.
2. The nature and condition of it.
3. The seasonableness of this Prophecie for this time.
4. What benefit you are like to have by this *Prophet*; and then divide the Prophecie in generall, and fall into the Chapter.

1. For the scope and occasion of this Prophecy. In generall, it is to shew the certaintie of *Jerusalems* destruction, and the seventie yeers captivitie, which were now in question; and so to confirm the prophecie of *Jeremie*, being of the same argument.

Jeremie having prophecied of the captivie of *Jerusalem* for seventy yeers, the utter ruine of the City and Temple; many, both in *Jerusalem* and *Babylon* (the captivity being begun, for now *Ezekiel* and divers were in *Babylon*) murmured and complained of *Jeremy*, that he was a false *Prophet*; that he had not the Spirit of God; that hee had misled the people; that he had brought them into bondage by his fair words, put them upon yeelding unto the King of *Babylon*, and betrayed them: You shall finde false *Prophets* bestirred themselves, and opposed his prophecy both in *Sion* and in *Babylon*, as *Jer.* 28. 1, 2, 3. *Hananiab* being at *Jerusalem*, when *Jeremiab* was in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the Priests and of all the people, saith he, Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the King of *Babylon*; within two full yeers will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lords House that *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* took away from this place, and carried them to *Babylon*; And I will bring again to this place *Ieconiah* the son of *Jehoiakim*, King of *Judab*, with all the captives of *Judab* that went into *Babylon*. Here is a false *Prophet* contradicts all that *Jeremiab* had spoken, touching the seventy yeers captivitie.

The false Prophets likewise in Babylon, they were at work, and they strengthen the hands of the false prophets at Jerusalem by their doctrine, Jer. 29. 8, 9. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Let not your Prophets and your Diviners that bee in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which you cause to bee dreamed, for they prophesie falsely unto you in my name, I have not sent them, saith the Lord. And in the 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. verses of the same Chapter, you shall find, that *Shemaiah* the *Nebelamite*, sent Letters from *Babylon* to all the Priests, and to all the people that were at *Jerusalem*, accusing *Jeremiah* for a mad man, for making himself a Prophet, for sending Letters to them in *Babylon*, for lengthning out the captivity to seventie years, for incouraging them to build houses, to plaine gardenes, to eat the fruit of them, he would have *Jeremiah* imprisoned and set in the stocks.

Thus *Jeremiah* was accused, cryed down at home and abroad, his prophecy was sleighted, scorned by many, and most were troubled, at what *Jeremiah* had prophesied: This made such work, both at *Jerusalem* and at *Babylon*, that the people of God were much despondent, & their enemies mightily insultive: Now hereupon the Lord stirreth up *Ezekiel*, powreth out his Spirit upon him, calleth him forth to prophecy, setteth him a work to justify *Jeremiah*, and to ratifie what he had foretold concerning the *Babylonish* captivity, threatening ruine to the City and Temple, to Kingdome and King, to their Nobles, Priests and all the people.

Hereupon (saith *Josephus*) the prophesie of *Ezekiel*, as soon as ever it was written (I conceive he meaneth not the whole prophesie, but some part of it) was sent to *Jerusalem*, but little fruit came of it; For *Zedekiah* being then King, and having seen it, he would neither beleve *Jeremy* nor *Ezekiel*, but presently concludes, that both were lyers and false Prophets: and that upon this ground; *Jeremiah* had said, Chapt. 21. 7. that *Zedekiah* should be carried captive into *Babylon*; and *Ezekiel* denied that he should see *Babylon*, Chapt. 12. 13. Hereupon, saith *Zedekiah*, they were both false, here is a contradiction, the one saith, I shall be carried into *Babylon*, the other saith, I shall not see *Babylon*. But God quickly made this good, for shortly after, *Nebuchadnezzar* came, besieged *Jerusalem*, took *Zedekiah* captive, put out both his eyes, bound him with fetters of brass, carried him to *Babylon*, which he never saw.

2 Kings 25. 7.

From

From hence by the way you may observe; first, upon what sleight and weak grounds, princes and people will cast off prophecies and truths of God, even upon mistakes and mis-apprehensions. *Zedekiah* could not apprehend what truths there were in these two prophecies, had he compared one thing with another, he might easily have seen truth; but small matters will make Princes and people turn off the truths of God, especially when they are not suitable to their own spirits; and in these daies people can without much ado turn off any truths Ministers bring, if they be not suitable to their apprehensions and fancies.

2. That God will make good the word of his Ministers and Prophets; though they seeme contradictory to mens fancies and sense. *Jeremiah* saith, that *Zedekiah* shall go into *Babylon*, and *Ezekiel* saith, he shall not see *Babylon*: God makes it good notwithstanding the prophecy is thrown away. The word of God shall take hold upon Princes, Nobles, People, and slay them if they have despised and stood out against it.

But from this general scope of *Ezekiel's* prophetic, that he is sent to strengthen & justify *Jeremy*, take this observation, That it is good for Ministers to strengthen the doctrine, works, hands & hearts one of another. A Prophet is questioned, trod under foot, his prophecy thrown out as false; an *Ezekiel* is stirred up to justify a *Jeremy*: When Ministers justify one another, the work goes on with more strength; when there is a double witness to a truth, it will seal it more strongly to the heart. God gave four Evangelists; one had been a great mercy; but that things might be ratified in your hearts, sealed up in your consciences, you have four Evangelists, each one strengtheneth the doctrine and things of another: So the consent of Ministers and Prophets is a great matter to ratify truths in the hearts and consciences of people, and to establish the Church. It is good therefore for an *Ezekiel* to strengthen a *Jeremy*.

2. More specially the scope of the Prophet is, to comfort the captives that were then in *Babylon*; for they began now to be troubled that they had hearkened to *Jeremiah*, yielded to the King of *Babylon*, because *Jeremie* had prophesied that *Jerusalem* should be destroyed, the Temple burnt, and that all should be laid waste, whereas *Jerusalem* stood still and now five yeeres were gone, and

and nothing done unto the City or Temple (for it was in the fifth year of *Jeboiachins* captivity, that *Ezekiel* began his Prophecie) They now began to be discouraged that they had left their habitations, that they had hearkned to *Jeremie* so far, as to come to *Babylon*: they were likewise disheartened in *Babylon*, they met with much hardship there, being put upon building, planting, sowing, and other difficulties: yea, the *Babylonians* themselves scoffed at them, and said, *Sing us one of your songs of Zion*. This made them to droop, and to with, O that we were at *Jerusalem* again, that we had never hearkned to *Jeremie*. The *Jewes* also at *Jerusalem* reproched them, and they said they were men of cowardly and base spirits, discouraged with the words of a timorous and lying Prophet, one *Jeremy*, & thereupon yeelding themselves into the hands of *Nebuchadnezzar*, they wretchedly betrayed the City, Religion, and their Countrey; these things went to the very bowels and reins of the godly, and did greatly disturb them. Hereupon the Lord, to support their spirits, to comfort them in these their distresses, and to be an *Ezekiel*, even the strength of God unto them, stirreth up *Ezekiel*, sets him on work.

Lastly, the scope of the Prophet is the same with the rest of the Prophets, viz. to lead unto Christ, as you may see by reading, *Luke* 24. 44. *Acts* 3. 18, 21, 24. They spake of Christ, and led to him; but it is more especially aimed at by this our Prophet, who begins with the Law executed, a captivity, but ends with a Temple, & restauration by Christ, thereby leading the people that were captives in *Babylon*, to Christ the King of *Jerusalem*. In *Ephes*. 1. 10. you have this expression, *That he might gather together in one, all things in Christ*, the word notes to summe up, or to make a brieve collection of the heads of all that was spoken before; implying, that much hath been said of Christ by others, and that the chief heads of all should be sum'd up, brought together, and be found in Christ. Much was spoken by *David* of Christ, much by *Isaiah*, much by *Jeremy*, *Zechariah*, *Ezekiel*; now the summe of all that is in them, and in the rest, shall be gathered together as in one head, you shall meet it all in Jesus Christ; He is the Magazine and Treasure of all their strength and wealth, the chief things that ever have bin spoke by the Prophets formerly, they are all concentrated in him. He is the *Alpha* and *Omiga*, the *Alpha* of *Genesis*, The seed of

ἀνακεφαλαι-
ώσαυθαι.

of the woman shall break the Serpents head; and the Omega of the Revelations, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. So that all between Genesis and the Revelation, leads either directly or collaterally unto Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 1.10. The Prophets prophesied of grace that should come unto you, searching when, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signifie, when it testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. See here, they shewed you the grace that should come, the Spirit testified in them of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow. They were Seers, and they saw Christ, and the glory of Christ, and they lead the people up to Christ.

Thus have you the scope and occasion of our Prophets prophesying and writing: it was to convince them of the heave captivity of seventy yeers, to strengthen Jeremies prophecy, to encourage the Church of God in Babylon, and to lead them unto Christ.

2. In the next place we are to shew you the nature and condition of this Prophecy, which is full of Majesty, obscurity and difficulty. Nazianzen saith, That Ezekiel is the chiefest of all the rest, for matter of admiration, and acuteness he is the greatest of all the Prophets, and the deepest; which made Ierome say, there was in this Prophecy of Ezekiel a sea of Scriptures, he is so deep, a labyrinth of the mysteries of God, he is so dark, so difficult; if he do but equalize other Prophets in dignity and worth, yet he exceeds them in difficulty and darkness. It must be said of this Prophet, as of Pauls Epistles, There are some things in them hard to be understood, and so there are many things in this Prophet which are hard to be understood: There are some strange words in him, such as are no where else in Scripture to be found: He hath dark visions in him, such as will exercise the greatest abilities in the world to find out the aim of God, and those truths that are wrapped up in them; he hath uncertain Chronologies and Chorographies, mysticall Parables, forreign Histories, and many transcendent matters, which may awaken your attention, and do call for the utmost of mans industry in the opening.

Hence it was counted rashness for any one to read this Prophet till he was thirty yeers of age. And Ierome tells us, that it was prohibited among the Jewes, that any should read the beginning of Genesis, the book of Canticles, the beginning or ending of this Prophet,

*Ante statem
sacerdosalem.*

A Lapid.

phet, till he were thirty yeers of age. The *Rabbins* think it not lawfull to interpret this Prophet, but only by touching some general things in it; particular things might not be descended into. One saith, *Ezekiel* is *Ieremie* vail'd, a hand shut up, and you know not what is in it, like a book sealed up, and none can open it, or knowes what is written within. These expressions have been used to set forth the darkness and difficulty of our Prophet.

Acts 8. 30, 31.

And I will appeal unto you all, this day, that if that question were put to you, when you shall read this Prophet, which *Phillip* once put to the *Eunuch*, *Understand you what you read?* might you not all answer without blushing, *How shall we understand without a guide?* And who is sufficient to guide your understandings through this difficult and dark Prophecie? For mine own part I durst not have ventured to launch into this deep, unless I had been requested unto it: And being called unto it, I desire to go out in the strength of the Lord, and to be as a Star in his hand, guided by his Spirit, to lead you through the difficulties of this Hieroglyphicall Prophet.

But you will say, If this Prophet be so difficult and dark, surely he is not seasonable, nor suitable to these times; some other Scripture might have had the preheminance.

For this, take two or three answers: First, I find that many Interpreters have fallen upon this Prophet, in troublesome and tumultuous times. *Gregory* the great, he writ and preached upon this Prophet, when the *Barbarians* were almost at the gates of *Rome*, and when the sword was devouring multitudes. *Ierome* likewise studied and writ upon this Prophet, what time *Alaricus* King of the *Goths*, took *Rome* and wasted all, and filled the Christian world with teares and blood. *Calvin* that great light of *Europe*, spent his last breath upon this Prophet, and in times that were not very peaceable, but stirring and troublesome. *Lavaters* Lectures upon this Prophet were together with the commotions in *France*; and hee professeth, that he did the more willingly give up himselfe to the study of this Prophet, that so he might free his spirit from the sad thoughts of the publike and private mischiefs which were in his dayes, and acknowledgeth this was a remedy to him against many evils.

Gallie's tumultibus.

Secondly, I answer, that compare our times a little with the times

times and state of the *Jewes*, and we shall see some seasonableness in handling this Prophet at this time.

1. The sins the Prophet cries out of amongst them, are rise amongst us; the sins then were idolatry, superstition, oppression, corruption in the worship of God, luxury, uncleanness, prophane-ness, scorning at goodness, hiding their eyes from the Lords Sabbaths, and the like. Now I ask, are not all these sins alive, and too lusty in our Kingdom at this time, and in this City wherein we live?

2. There was then a Malignant party which was active and at work, and did oppose and hinder the Reformation (what lay in them) which was on foot by *Jeremy*, by *Ezekiel*, by the three *Children*, by *Baruch*, by the *Rechabites*; all these and many others opposed the corruptions of the times, & laboured to have a reformation in the worship of God, to bring the people back again from their corrupt waies to the Lord; but there was a great opposition by the Malignant party, and the chief opposers then, were the Priests, and the false Prophets, who poisoned the judgements of the people, who suggested false things unto them, who fed them with vain hopes, with corrupt opinions, & deceivable doctrines: the chief of the Priests were chiefest in malignancie and opposition: this you shall see, *2 Chron.* 36. 14, 15, 16. *All the chief of the Priests and the people transgressed very much, they polluted the House of the Lord, they mocked the messengers of God, despised his words, and misused his Prophets; this was the practice of those times; was there ever any great disorder, corruption in the Church, or any sedition, treason almost in the State, but some of the chief of the Priests have had their hands in it? When the Calf was set up in Moses his daies, Aaron the Priest had his head and hand in it; when David was a dying, Adonijah makes the sedition and stir in the Kingdom, but Abiathar the Priest had a great hand in it? Both in the State and in the Church you may well observe, that the chief of the Priests have had their hands in the evill, in the trouble. And have not we now a malignant party that oppose the reformation intended & begun? Do they not set themselves with all their might against the *Jeremies*, *Daniels*, *Ezekiels*, and *Rechabites* of the Land that will not defile themselves? There is such a party, you all know, that do oppose godliness, that despise the Prophets, scorn the Saints, make sad the hearts of the righteous, and strengthen the hands of wickednes, therefore this Prophecy may be seasonable enough in regard of that malignant party that doth oppose too openly.*

D

3. They

3. They had lost their countrey, their choicest comforts, they were in captivity and constant jeopardy of their lives, if they provoked the *Babylonians*, they were ready to fall upon them, and root them out presently; and those at *Jerusalem* were in danger every day to have their liberties, estates, consciences, religion, and lives, taken from them; and are not we like unto them? and are not we, even in a Land of libertie, in a state of captivity? Do not our estates, our liberties, our consciences, our Religion, our lives, and all lie at the stake? We are even in *Babylon* in the midst of *Sion*; we are in a sad and heavie condition, therefore this prophetic may be seasonable now, considering our estate is so like to theirs.

4. The times then were such, that they loathed *Manna*, ordinary and plain truths would not down, unless truths were new and transcendent, they were weary of them, and slighted them; *Jeremy* was too plain a Prophet for them, too low, and God gives them *Ezekiel*, a dark and hard Prophet. And is it not so in these daies? we have been fed with *Manna* so long, that we loath *Manna*, as a wormie thing; If we have not something new, unheard of, transcendent, we are weary, we thinke it not worth our going out of doors, if so, then here is a Prophet that may be suitable to these times, and your desires; God gave them this Prophet in a time of affliction, and there was something in it; for afflictions open mens understandings, and enlarge their capacities: when people are under pressures, then their understandings are quickest, then they are most apprehensive: therefore God gave them such a Prophet as might sute with their condition, in exercising their parts and graces to the full, when at the best. Now is a time of affliction, if your spirits be awakened, and the bent of them be after high and hard things, lo, here are difficulties and transcendencies for you; here are high things to draw up your thoughts, to exercise your spirits, bee they never so choise and apprehensive.

One thing more for the seasonableness of this Prophet, it is said heaven was open, and *Ezekiel* saw visions of God. If ever God hath opened heaven since Christ now he hath done it in these sad times God hath now caused, & is causing you every day to see visions out of the Prophets, and out of the Gospel. These expository Lectures are openings of heaven, and let out clear and choise light unto you from heaven; therefore seeing heaven is opened, let vision of God be counted seasonable, and become acceptable unto you.

But if this Prophet be so dark and difficult, what is the benefit and fruit we shall have by him?

This

This is the next head we are to come unto, and the benefits of this Prophet are these: the darker the Prophet is, the more of God you may look for from him. God dwelleth in darknesse, as well as in light. *Psal. 18. 11. He made darknesse his secret place.* And *Ezod. 19. 9. God came to Moses in a thick cloud, and there Moses had the most of God* Here God is comming to you in a dark Prophet, and questionless you shall find much of God in him; here you shall see much of Gods mercy in upholding and comforting the spirits of his people, and providing for them in a strange land; here you shall see much of Gods justice in punishing sinners for their sins and iniquities; here you shall see much of Gods truth in fulfilling of prophecies; here you shall find much of Gods power in subverting of Kings and Kingdomes; here you shall find much of his manifold Wisdome in these dark visions; here you shall find more of God then you expect.

2. This prophecy is an exact History of the time of the *Jewes* being in captivitie; in it you have many passages of *Nebuchadnezzars* reign and government, of his acts abroad, and at home, and of Gods dealing with his people in the time of this their seventy yeers captivitie. Were not *Daniel* and *Ezekiel* extant, we should have such a great losse as the world could not tell how to repair it; the acts of Gods dealing with his Church and people in that seventy yeers, would be swallowed up in a *Chaos* of darknes.

3. You shall see for what sins God subverteth and overthroweth Kingdomes and States. In this Prophet you shall find that the Lord doth ruine glorious Churches, great Cities, mighty Kingdomes, men of great renown, families and posterities, and the particular sins for which he doth it; Namely, for false worship, Idolatry, injustice, uncleanness, prophaning of his Sabbaths, contempt of his Word, abuse of his Prophets, and sins of that nature. So that as it is, *Prov. 21. 30. There is no wisdome, no counsel, nor understanding against the Lord.* God will overthrow even Kings and their Councils, Kingdoms, with their Nobility and Gentry, with their Magistrates and people. God will overthrow them when he once sets upon such a work, such a design: There is no standing out against him.

4. You shall see here also the different carriage between the godly and the wicked, in times of Judgement. When judgements are abroad in the world, the inhabitants of the earth should learn righteousness; but wicked men they grow more active against

God, more impudent, more desperate and hard-hearted; they combine and plot together to root out the righteous: this you shall see in this Prophecie. And for the Godly you shall finde that when judgements are neer and upon them, they are mourning in secret, they get together, they that fear God speak often one to another; they fast, they pray, they redeem the time, they work out their salvation with fear and trembling, they give God no rest, they will be at it at midnight: In a word you shall finde the carriage of the godly to be exceeding contrary to the carriage of the wicked.

5. Here you shall find Gods new Covenant, wherein you shall see the riches of free grace, God doing all, both making the Covenant and performing it, both commanding and giving what he doth command unto your soules.

6. You shall finde that this Prophet is an Evangelicall Prophet, for he points at Christ, he will shew you where he is, he will lead you to the Temple, where you shall see Christ with his line in his hand, and measuring out a Temple for the times of the Gospel, measuring of his worship, his worshippers, and all that doth concern the new *Jerusalem*. Much of Christ will bee found at least in the conclusion of this Prophet.

7. You shall have a lively representation of the uncertainty of all things, and of all conditions in this world. In *Lament. 4. 12.* it is said there, that the Kings of the earth, and all the Inhabitants of the world, would not have beleaved, that the adversary and the enemy should have entred into the gates of *Jerusalem*. None thought, none of the Kings of the earth, none of the Kings of *Israel* beleaved that ever *Jerusalem*, which was so fortified by mountaines round about, should be taken by the enemy: But you shall see in this Prophet, that even *Jerusalem*, the Citie of God, the Temple that was the glory of the world, and *Sion* the perfection of beauty, they are all laid waste: Neither Prince, Priest, Prophet, Nobles, nor any are spared, but all are destroyed, all are carried into captivitie, all are brought under, the sonnes, the precious sonnes of *Sion* are carried away into *Babylon*. So that there is no place, no condition, no prerogative that can priviledge any from the hand of God where once sin is come to a perfection. *Righteousnesse exalteth a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.* Let them be Jewes or Gentiles, let them be Kings, Priests, or Prophets, when sin is grown to a height, then the wrath of God comes to a per-

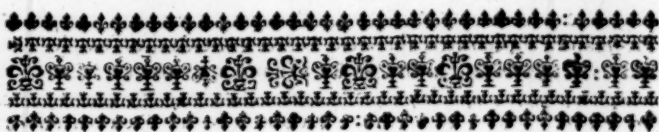
a perfection, and God will lay a *Sion* wast, God will raze a Temple; God will carry a *Jeboiakim*, a *Zedekiah*, Prince and Prophet, Priest and People into captivitie. Is *Sion* gone? is the Temple razed? is *Jerusalem* laid in the dust? What confidence then can any Kingdome, can any City have? Let not *England*, let not *London* be secure. Fear and Tremble. Repent of sin. Take heed of provoking God. Look beyond the Kingdomes of the earth. Look up to heaven, and make sure of that Kingdome which cannot be shaken, which cannot be taken from you. Thus you have some of the benefits that are to come by this Prophet.

We are now to fall upon the general division of the Prophecy.

In this Prophet you have,

1. The Preface; wherein is contained Gods appearing to *Ezekiel*, his calling of him and strengthening of him in his office; And these are laid down in the three first Chapters.
2. You have the Prophecy it self; wherein you have these four things.
 1. The destruction of the *Jewes* by the Babylonish captivity, with the causes thereof, viz. their sins. This is laid down in the next 21. Chapters.
 2. Threatning of judgement and destruction to severall Nations that had insulted over the people of God, being carried away captive, and the hand of God being upon them; these were the *Ammonites*, the *Moabites*, the *Edomites*, the *Philistines*, the *Assyrians*, and *Babylonians*: And this he doth from the 25. to the 33. Chapter.
 3. Sharpe reproving of the *Jewes* for their iniquitie, for their hard-heartednesse, for their not improving the hand of God upon them; and exhorting them to repentance, he tells them of freedome, some mercy and deliverance; and after that again of affliction and trouble that shall befall them: And this he doth from the 33. to the 39. Chapter.
 4. A typicall Prophecie concerning Christ and spirituall freedome through him; laid down in the vision of the new Temple, and of the new *Jerusalem*, from the 39. Chapter to the end; wherein there will bee many glorious things made known in due time.

Thus have you the generall division of the Prophecie.



To come to the Chapter.

Verf. 1, 2, 3. Now it came to passe, &c.

In this Chapter you have :

- I. Ezekiels first vision, from the fourth verse to the end of the Chapter.
- II. In the three first verses you have :
 1. The time, what year, what moneth, what day this vision was, v. 1, 2.
 2. The place, 1. Generall, the land of the Chaldeans ; 2. Particular, by the river of Chebar, verf. 3.
 3. Together with this, you have the occasion ; his being there among the Captives.
- III. The subject of this Vision, Ezekiel.

Described ;

 1. From his Office ; a Priest.
 2. From his Parentage ; the Son of Buzi.
- IIII. The Author of this Vision, God. I saw Visions of God ; such Visions as came from God.

Now it came to passe, &c.

Now]



He word in the Originall is, *And* ; *And it came to passe*. It seems a strange beginning of a Book ; especially when it referres to nothing said or writ before. There are many of the books of sacred Writ begin on this manner ; as *Exodus*, *Leuiticus*, *Numbers*, *Josuah*, *Ruth*, *Samuel*, *Kings*, and divers others. In historicall Books, it may note the Series, connect things Antecedent with things Consequent : But in Propheticall Books, it cannot note or make a connexion with things foregoing. *Jonas* begins his Prophecie so, and what was the

the Antecedent to make up the Connexion? Here is the *Queré*, and difficultie, why the Prophet should begin his Book on this manner, *And it came to passe*.

Some satisfie the doubt thus, They make it an idiome or propriety of the Hebrew tongue, to begin Books with this Particle, *And*, or *Now*; and so they make nothing of it. But surely this is not all, there is something wrapped up in this *Now*, or *And*, which may be of instruction and use to us.

Now, or, *And it came to passe*. The Prophet doubtless was meditating upon the condition he was in; meditating upon the condition he had been in. Time was that we were at *Jerusalem*, that we went with joy to the Temple; to the solemn Assemblies, that we heard the voice of God, that we saw his glory, his beauty, his power, and his strength there: Time was that we had communion with the Saints; that we sung songs of *Sion* together with cheerfulness and with joy; we had precious Ordinances, honourable Sabbaths, Sacrifices that did cheare our hearts, and seal up pardon of our sinnes to us, and intimate the good will of God in Christ to our souls; we sate under our Vines and under our fig-trees, and were in safetie. But now, now we eat the bread of mourners, wee drinke our own teares; Now wee are deprived of all Ordinances, stript of all our comforts; wee are sold into the hands of enemies, we are become captives to a Heathen Prince; our bondage is grievous, and must continue seventie yeers. It is the fruit of our sinne. God is righteous in all his judgements, and if we willingly accept the punishment of our iniquitie, he will in wrath remember mercy, regard us in our low estate, he will sweeten and sanctifie our captivity to us.

Such thoughts as these were in the breast of the Prophet. And I incline the rather to thinke so, because it was upon the Sabbath day (as I shall shew you afterwards when I come to open some things that follow) when hee was meditating on this manner. Also you shall finde in Scripture Relatives used without Antecedents; as *Psal.* 87. 1. *His foundation is in the holy Mountains*. Here is a Relative without any Antecedent, yet the Antecedent is supposed, and easily found out. *His foundation*, whose foundation? the foundation of the Temple, the foundation of the

Vau.

the Citie is in the *holy Mountains*. The Scripture doth sometime lay down things relatively and conjunctively, when the antecedent may be supposed and found out with a little inquirie: So here, *And* it was thus and thus with the Prophet, he was meditating, there was the Word in his bosome, and the particle *And* connects that with this Word of God revealed to him, and expressed by him.

Hence then take this note : *That the hearts of the servants of God are exercised with thoughts of Gods dealings with the Church and themselves.* Their thoughts are better exercised then the world thinks. Ezekiel here had his thoughts busied about his former and present condition, his heart was exercised that way. *I have other meat to eat (saith Christ) then yee know of;* So the Saints, they have other meat, other thoughts to feed upon then the world takes notice of ; It is oft unknown how their thoughts are exercised. *Eli* thought *Hanna* madde when he saw her lips go ; but her heart was better employed then he fancied. Many thinke Gods people melancholy, and not worthy of their company, they are but heavy pieces, when their hearts are in heaven, and they are at solid and serious converse with God. You have an expression to this purpose in *Cant. 1. 2. Let him kisse me with the kisses of his mouth.* The Spouse had not spoke of her Beloved before. It is a strange speech to begin thus; *Let him kisse me with, &c.* Who should kisse her ? here is no mention of Christ, no mention of God, no mention of any before, but on a sudden, *Let him kisse me with, &c.* Though Christ had not been mentioned by her lips, yet Christ was deep in her thoughts, and in her desires, she had meditated on Christ before, and so breakes out into this Speech, *Let him kisse me with, &c.* And Ezekiel having his heart meditating, and taken up with the thoughts of his former and present condition, of the Church in generall, of Gods wrath to them, and Gods mercy in the midst of his wrath, breaks out, *And, or Now, in the thirtieth year it was so and so.*

This then instructs us what is the practice of the choice Worships of God, their hearts are meditating & taken up with divers things that the world is not aware of. It is good for us to be in meditation this way : *Isaac* he went out to meditate in the evening,

ing, and while he was meditating cometh *Rebeckah*, the desire of his soul; and the Prophet being in that posture, hath visions of God to chear his soul; and the souls of his people. If you would be meditating, you may see heaven opened, and God comming down into your bosomes.

In the thirtieth year.

This time doth trouble Interpreters very much; It is not said in the thirtieth year of what, or of whom, but barely in the thirtieth year. Here is an uncertain Chronologie, which makes a difficultie in the Prophet.

1. *In the thirtieth year*; not the thirtieth year from the Jubilee, as some do make it, for the fifth year of *Jehoiachins* captivitie corresponds not with the thirtieth from the Jubilee; for as *Junius*, and some others (that take pains in searching out the truth herein) do observe, that falls in but with the ninth year from the Jubilee; therefore we let that passe.

2. *In the thirtieth year.* Some make this to be the thirtieth year of his age, the Prophet was thirty years old, and then he began to propheticie. But this is not the practice of the Penmen of Scripture, to compute the Prophecies from their own age and birth; and there is good reason for it, because prophecies and things that do concern the good of the Church so neerly and so much, do receive witnes and strength from the time wherein they are extant, and those times must not be particular times, times of particular men that are not known, but the times must be such as are known to the world, that all may be convinced the thing was done at such a time: now the birth of one that afterward was to be a Prophet, is not like to be a time so noted in the world, that the world then should take notice that *Ezekiel* was born, and did begin the computation of his propheticie from thence. It is not like therefore that this should bee the meaning of the thirtieth year; If so, he would have said in the thirtieth year of my life.

3. *In the thirtieth year.* That is, in the thirtieth year since the Law was found in *Josiah* his daies, and since that great Pascover which was kept by him. In the 2 *King*, 22. there is mention of finding the book of the Law, and in *Cbapt*. 23. of the great Pascover, and this was in the eighteenth year of *Josiah* his reign, *vers*. 53.

Now if we compute the time from the eighteenth year of *Josiah*,

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2 Kings 24.

it doth amount even to the thirtieth yeer in which our Prophet had his vision, and began his prophecy: For *Josiab* reigned thirteen yeers after this (as you may observe in the Story) *hee* reigned thirty and one yeers in all, 2 Kings 22. 1. and then *Iehoabaz* his son reigned three moneths, Chap. 23. 31. then *Jehoiakim* reigned eleven yeers, v. 36. and *Jehoiachin* his son reigned three months before he was carried captive into *Babylon*, and five yeers of his captivity was past when *Ezekiel* began his prophecy. So then take the thirteen yeers of *Josiab*, the eleven yeers of *Jehoiakim*, there is twenty four, then adde the five yeers of *Jehoiachins* captivity, that makes twenty nine, and then take three moneths that *Iehoabaz* reigned, and the three months that *Jehoiachin* reigned before he was carried captive, it makes up twenty nine yeers and six months, therefore saith he in the thirtieth yeer, it was the thirtieth yeer current, and so Expositors do for the generality put it.

And whereas some would have it to be the thirtieth yeer of the *Chaldean* account; it being according to them, thirty yeers from the beginning of that Monarchy from *Nebuchadonosor*, (as some call him) who was the father of this *Nebuchadnezzar* the great, that carried away *Jehoiachin* into captivity: If it were the thirtieth yeer of that Monarchy, it falls in with the thirty yeers since the eighteenth of *Josiab*, wherein the Law was found, and the Passover kept; so that these two may stand together, and there need be no jarring between Interpreters for this time.

In the fourth moneth. It was not the Moneth *Tebet* or *Thebeth* (as some will have it) which answers to that we call *January*; but the moneth *Tamuz*, or *Tammuz*, that which answereth to part of *June* and part of *July*; (about the time we are now in) for the *Jews* were to reckon their moneths from *April*, as *Exod.* 12. 2. *This shall be the beginning of moneths, it shall be the first moneth of the yeer to you; that moneth was Abib, Nisan, or Nissan,* and answereth to part of *March*, and part of *Aprill*; now from thence this is the fourth moneth, and falleth in with the latter end of *June* and beginning of *July*.

In the fifth day of the moneth. This I finde some do make to be the Sabbath day, and it is very probable that it should be so; for *Chapt.* 3. 16. he saith, that at the end of seven dayes the Word of the Lord came unto him again. Hence they collect, that it is not likely that

that God would step over the Sabbath day, and give *Ezekiel* visions upon another day, and not upon that; for it *Ezekiel* had had his visions upon another day, the people should have been destitute of all the benefit, they were so employed in their works of building and planting, and other accommodations for a captivity, that they had no leisure to resort unto *Ezekiel* upon a week day; therefore they strongly conclude, that it was upon a Sabbath day in the latter end of the week.

From hence observe:

1. That that time is not considerable wherein the Law of God is out of date; the time was reckoned here from the eighteenth yeere of *Josiah*, wherein the Law was found. It was lost in *Manassehs* and *Amons* daies, till the eighteenth yeere of *Josiah*, when being found, it was brought forth for the comfort & instruction of the people, for the worship and honour of God, and from that *punctum* the Spirit of God reckons the time, and begins the account. When Gods Law is out of the way, and his worship down, that is no considerable time at all in the eie of God. Parties that are in the dark, or dead, we do not reckon of their time. One converted in his old age, said, I have been long in the world, I have lived but a little time, meaning, since hee was converted, the time before was incomputable; The widow that liveth in pleasure, the Apostle saith, *is dead while she lives*, and the world is dead that hath not the Law, the place is dead that hath not the Ordinances of God; so long they have been, but they have not lived, they have not measured time; and therefore the Spirit of God fixeth the account at the finding of the Law.

1 Tim. 5, 6.

2. The things here not being specified, but left undetermined, that God would have us observe the remarkable passages in Church and States when they fall out, not one or two, but many, or all the chief: as the eighteenth yeer of *Josiah* when the Law was found, when that great Pascheover was kept, when he and the people of God entred into a solemn covenant with God, when the great reformation was made among them, such great Acts were taken notice of; as also the changes in *Babylon*, when the *Chaldean* Monarchy began, when *Nebuchadnezzar* was put into the Throne, and his head lifted up above others. God would have us take notice of the chief acts of his mercy and providence at

chief times, *Hosea 14 8.* Ephraim shall say, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* There will be a great alteration; then it will be a remarkable time, said God, *I have heard him, and observed him, and then followeth, Who so is wise, and he shall understand these things, prudent, and he shall know them.*

Now is a time of memorable emergents, and they should be considered, the famous things of 1640. 1641. ought to be had in everlasting remembrance: a trienniall Parliament, resurrection of Religion, Law and Gospel were found again, Reformation begun, Protestation and Covenants taken, the Kingdomes united here, and forreign ones shaken in pieces.

3. This makes for the truth and strength of our Prophets visions and prophecy; for when exact particular times and places are set down, that things were done in such a yeer of such a King, such a moneth, such a day of the moneth, it addes weight to an ordinary History; and when the Spirit of God shall so punctually determine the time to a yeer, a moneth, a day, it is a strong seal to the truth of the visions and prophecy.

4. See here (from the fifth day,) that God hath a speciall care of his Sabbaths, and of the spirituall good of his servants. Of his Sabbaths, that they shall not lie in the dark, when they are in *Babylon*, God will open heaven and appear to a Prophet, and give him visions upon a Sabbath day. God will do it too upon a Sabbath day, that so the people which were in a sad condition, that laboured now in Brick and clay again, that were building, planting, taken up with secular affaires, might have a seasonable opportunity for the good of their souls. The Sabbath was made for man, for the good of man, and they found it so. Though they be in *Babylon*, they shall have a Prophet, they shall have visions, and visions upon a Sabbath day, when they have libertie and opportunitie to come to the Prophet to be instructed in these visions, without prejudice to their Callings.



Ezekiel 1. 1, 2, &c.

(As I was among the captives by the river Chebar) that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

In the fifth day of the moneth (which was the fifth year of Jehoiachins captivity.)

The Word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the Priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans, by the River Chebar, and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

As I was among the captives by the River Chebar.



Here is the place mentioned where the Prophet was, and the occasion of his being in it.

Among the Captives.

The Originall is, in the midst of the captivity, the Abstract being put for the Concrete, captivity for captives: and this is ordinary in the Scripture; as circumcision for circumcised, Phil. 3. 3. Election for Elected, Rom. 11. 7. the election hath obtained, that is, the elected, and here, in the midst of the captivity, is, in the midst of the captives.

In the midst, is not to be taken Geometrically and strictly, as if he were exactly in the midst of them proportionably every way considered; but in the midst is to be understood, among the captives, they were captives, and so was he: As Josh. 7. 13. There is an accursed thing in the midst of you, that is, amongst you.

By the river Chebar.

This is the particular place; The notes upon your quarto Bibles, do say, that this river Chebar was part of Euphrates. Rabbins and others say it is Euphrates it self. But if it were Euphrates, why should the Spirit of God change that name which was known, and

and take a name which was unknown? Surely the Spirit of God would have said *Euphrates*, and not *Chebar*. If it be a part or channel of *Euphrates*, why kept it not one of those names that is mentioned, *Gen. 2. Gihon, Pison, Hiddekel*? *Gihon* it cannot be, for that river runneth toward *Ethiopia*; *Hiddekel* it is most likely to be which lyeth in those parts, but that river kept its name, and was not changed as appeareth, *Dan. 10. 4.* where it is said, *He was by the river Hiddekel*: if *Pison* be it, some reason must be given of deserting that name, and imposing one new and unheard of. Interpreters therefore conceive this *Chebar* to be a river of it self, rising from the mountain *Masius*, (running through *Mesopotamia*) and emptying it self into *Euphrates*, at a place where is a Town called *Chebar*, whence the denomination probably may come; but rather it is called *Chebar*, because of the plenty of waters that are in it, and for the plenty of grasse that is upon the banks thereof.

Neer this river had the *Jewes* their habitation, and they were placed together. *Chapt. 3. 15.* *I came to them of the captivitie, that dwelt by the River Chebar.* Here they were placed, because the *Jewes* were odious to the *Babylonians*, as of old they were to the *Egyptians*, and dwelt distinct from them; In *Sennanassars* time, when the ten Tribes were carried into *Ashria*, they were put in *Halab*, and *Habor*, by the river of *Gozan*, *2 Kings 18.* The *Rabbins* call this river *Sabbation*, the *Sabbaticall* river, because it flowed not, but desisted from its ordinary course upon the *Sabbath* day; and *Iosephus* saith, that it was certain this river did constantly forsake its course upon the *Sabbath* day; God thereby miraculously intimated to them, that he would have them keep a *Sabbath*, though in a strange land. These captives were fixed by *Gozan*, or by *Chebar*, which is the particular place; the next is the generall place, the land of the *Chaldeans*.

Chaldea was the countrey of *Abraham*, he went from *Ur* of the *Chaldeans*, *Genesis Chapt. 11. verse 31.* and *Stephen* calls it *Mesopotamia*, *Acts 7. 2.* *Abraham* was in *Mesopotamia* before he dwelt in *Charran*. It lay on the North of *Chaldea*, between *Euphrates* and *Tygris*; in *verse 4.* it is said, *Abraham* came out of the land of the *Chaldeans*, and dwelt in *Charran*: these two, *Chaldea* and *Mesopotamia* were promiscuously taken, sometimes being neer together, and sometimes distinctly. The chief city in *Chaldea* was *Babylon*,

Babylon now called Bagdit from *Baga*, which in *Arabick* signifieth a garden, because it stood in a pleasant place, and had many gardens in it; it was built by *Nimrod*, that mighty hunter, the first King that ever the world had; when the towre in it was built up, nine thousand one hundred threescore and four paces from the ground, which is above nine of our miles, then it pleased God from heaven to confound their language, and of one made three. *Quia tri*
score and twelve, hence was it called *Babel*, *Gen. 11.9.* because God *בלל*
there confounded the language of all the earth, and their work *Qua excussit.*
together.

This countrey was called the land of *Nimrod*, *Mic. 5. 6.* and the land of *Shinar*, *Gen. 10. 10.* which signifie shaking, because it shook their language, and scattered the people inhabited it, out of the land: It is branded by *Zachary* for the dwelling place of wickedness, *Zac. 5. 11.* Out of this land of *Chaldea*, it is conceived by some, came the three Wise men, who offered the gifts to Christ; for the *Chaldeans* were the chiefeft Astrologers, and exactest Astronomers that were in the world, as you may observe, *Dan. 2.*

These *Chaldeans* were a martiall people, very cruel, *Ier. 6. 22, 23.* A people cometh from the North countrey, and a great Nation, they shall *Ier. 50. 41, 42.*
lay hold on bow and spear, they are cruell, and have no mercy, their voice roareth like the Sea, &c. They were polluted with abominable Idolatries, superstitions, forceries, enchantments, and all manner of prophanenesse; into this land, and among this people, did God bring the *Jewes*, who had been so dear to him.

Babylon was the seat of the chiefeft and greatest Monarch of the earth, thither came a continuall conflux of people from all parts of the world, to whose scornes and wrongs the *Jewes* were daily exposed; they said, These are the holy people, these are they come out of the holy land, come and sing us one of the songs of *Zion*; and so prophane was *Belsazzar*, as that he took the holy vessels to quasse and carouse in: into this land were they brought, and the godly were constrained to hear and see the blasphemies and abominations that were amongst them, and to bear the scornes and frowns of all commers.

Thus have I opened to you the particular place, by the river *Chobar*, and the generall place, the land of *Chaldea*.

Let us see now what observations will arise from hence:

1. Observe,

Nu-
qu-
am Spi-
ritum sanctum
extra terram
sanctam pro-
phetis loqui.

1. Observe, that God is not tied to places; let the place be never so holy, let it be the holy Land, the holy City, the holy Temple, God is not tied unto either of them, but hath his liberty to work and manifest himself where he pleaseth, even in *Babylon*. The *Rab- bins* have a rule goeth for truth amongst them, and is firmly be- lieved, that the Holy Ghost never spake unto the Prophets out of the holy Land; and therefore they say, *Jonas* fled to *Tarsish* from the face of the Lord, to avoid the inspiration of the Almighty. But here we see in *Chaldea* by the river *Chobar*, is *Ezekiel* inspired; here heaven is opened unto him; here he seeth visions of God; here the Word of the Lord cometh expressly unto him; and here the Spirit of God doth work mightily in him. One shift they have for this, They say *Ezekiel* was a Prophet before he was carried out of the land of *Canaan*, before he came into *Chaldea*. But wee have nothing in *Jeremy* nor *Ezekiel*, nor in any other part of Scrip- ture, that *Ezekiel* was a Prophet, and moved to prophecy before he came into *Chaldea*: and therefore it is said, *vers. 3. That the hand of the Lord was upon me there, there first, in that polluted land, I never had the Spirit of the Lord before I came into Chaldea. When the Inhabitants of Jerusalem had polluted the holy City, prophane- d the holy Temple, and defiled the holy Land with their Idola- tries, and other wickednesses, then God departs, pitcheth his Ta- bernacle elsewhere, and poureth out his Spirit in Babylon. God is not tied to places, he can in a dungeon, in a prison, in a Babylon, let down his Spirit into the heart of any servant of his, and raise him to a prophetical height.*

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Quasi ab ipso
inferis?

2. Observe, that no place is so wicked, but God can raise up instruments to do him and the Church service there, *Babylon* was a seat or land of wickednesse, a sinke of all sin, the mother of Har- lots, and abominations of the earth, *Rev 17. 5*. Yet here even out of Hell it self, doth God raise up a Prophet for his people. It was said by *Nathaniel*, *Joh. 1. 46. Can any good come out of Nazareth?* Much more may it be said, Can any good come out of *Babylon*? Can any good come out of *Rome*? What was answered there? *Come and see.* So here, come and see a Prophet in *Babylon*, come and see the Spirit of God poured out upon *Ezekiel*, even there. And to this may the first word of the prophecy have some respect, as if the Prophet had said, They have had Prophets in *Jerusalem* a long time

time, but no Prophets elsewhere: behold, now also is a Prophet in *Babylon*. God can raise up to himself Saints in Nero's Court, he can raise up instruments ordinary and extraordinary to do him service in *Babylon*, in *Rome*, in *Egypt*, in most prophane and vile places that are overspread with all Idolatries and abominations whatsoever.

3. See here a door open for the enlargement of the Church, a type of Gods goodness toward the *Gentiles*. The Church had been shut up for 850. years in *Judea* (for so long it was from *Joshuabs* entring into *Canaan* to the captivitie) but now he openeth a door for the *Gentiles*, here is a Prophet, a Church in *Babylon*, here is a way made for the bringing in of the *Gentiles*, and enlarging the borders of *Sion*. God will not only have mercy upon *Jewes*, but upon the *Babylonians*.

4. That the godly are wrapped up in the same calamitie with the wicked. *Ezekiel* is among the captives, and many others with him; they lost their countrey, friends, estates, liberties, ordinances, they were in great miserie, brought very low, under a heathen King, amongst enemies, exposed to the scorns and wrongs of all, and *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, the three Children, *Mordecai*, and many others, were all in the same condition. The children of God are subject to the same outward publike or private calamities that the wicked are. *All things come alike unto all*; if you look upon the outward face of things, there is no exception. Good *Josiah* was slain in the battell as well as wicked *Abah*; *Naboth* was stoned as well as *Achan*: If *David*, a man after Gods own heart, prosper in the wars, so doth *Nebuchadnezzar* a heathen, a tyrant: Sickneses, diseases, deaths, of what kinde soever, are common to good as well as to bad: the sword, plague, famine, hath seized upon the carcases of the godly as well as the wicked: If wicked women die in childbirth, so doth good *Rachel*. There is no condition but may befall the children of God; the same afflictions 1 Pet. 5. 10. are accomplished in your brethren, that are in the world; and no temptation hath taken hold of you, but such as is common to the nature of man. Whatsoever affliction then you have, whether publike, or private, this may be some solace, it is no other then what befell *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and hath befallen the godly in all generations.

5. That the godly are mingled in this world with the wicked and prophane; men of great worth, great grace, rare excellencies, they are not so privileged as to be exempted from the society of the wicked and ungodly. Here is *Ezekiel* amongst the *Chaldeans*, *Ioseph* was amongst the *Egyptians*; and *Iob* saith of himself, *Chap.* 30. 29. that he was a Brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owles; and *David* cries out, *Psal.* 120. 5. *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesecb, and that I dwell in the tents of Kedar*, that is, with a barbarous and prophane people, that were like to the posterity of *Mesecb*, and *Kedar*. The Church of *Smyrna*, *Rev.* 2. 9. was pestered with the Synagogue of Satan; and *Pergamus*, *vers.* 13. had her dwelling where Satans seat was. In that City, if you observe the 14. & 15. verses you shall finde there was much Idolatry and persecution; for there were those that held the doctrine of *Balaam*, who taught *Balack* to cast a stumbling block before the children of *Israel*, to eat things sacrificed to Idols and to commit fornication; and there *Antipas* my faithfull Martyr was slain. Where there is Idolatry will bee persecution and uncleannesse, and where these be, is the seat of Satan, and the Church of *Pergamus* was seated even where Satan had his seat and throne; therefore it is no strange thing for the people of God to dwell amongst the wicked. In *Canticles* the Church of Christ is said to be a Lilly among thornes; a Lilly, and none growing neer but thornes that scratch, prick, and tear the Church, *Micah* 7. 4. *The best of them is as a brier, the most upright is sharper then a thorn-bedge*, the best of the wicked are Briers and Thornes one time or other. It is the lot of the godly to be among the *Chaldeans* while they live here in the world.

6. See here that God hath a special care of his Church and people, when they are in the lowest & worst condition; where now is *Ierusalem* become? where is the glory of all the world? now they are carried into captivity, now they are in a strange land under a strange King and government, now they are deprived of all their sacrifices & services of that nature; now they are imprisoned, now they are in danger of their liberties and lives every day; yet as the Psalmist saith, *Thou remembrest us in our low estate*, in this low estate when they are at the river *Chabar*, in the land of the *Chaldeans* doth God remember them, and sends an *Ezekiel* to them, and unto him even in *Chaldea*, in *Babylon*, were the heavens opened, and he saw
visions

visions of God. Where there are the greatest enemies, God will shew himself a friend; where the Church is exceedingly straitned, God will give enlargement; Now his people are in *Babylon*, in captivity, he sends a Prophet to them, *Ezekiel*, the strength of God, such a Prophet as shall be strong to keep them off from Idolatry, though they were amongst Idolaters, strong to comfort their hearts against all the strong discouragements they had, strong to lead them toward God and heaven, though they had false Prophets to lead them down to Hell; strong to oppose the false Prophets, to reprove them stoutly, to incourage the people faithfully, and to make known the mind of God unto them without flattery. They shall have a Prophet, though they be in *Babylon*; this should stay up the spirits of the godly, if they should be driven into Wildernesses, God will provide *Ezekiels* for them.

7. Observe from the place, that we are to take heed of judging the condition of men by their outward afflictions. When great calamities come, people ordinarily grow great censurers, and condemn those parties that are under them, to be the greatest sinners of all others. Take heed of this, if you will draw such conclusions as these, the hand of God is upon such; in such a place there is the plague, there is the sword cutting them off, they are carried out of their country into captivity, there they are imprisoned, there they are held in great bondage: surely these are none of Gods people, these are naught, vile persons, reprobates; If you will judge thus, you wil condemn the generation of the righteous: For *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Mordecai*, the three Children, and many others very godly, were in the captivity, as well as those that were very wicked; such conclusions must not be drawn from the sufferings of the Saints; you know the Prophets and Apostles met with very hard measure, while they were in the world, they were whipped, stocked, imprisoned, stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, tormented, slain with the sword, and evill intreated every where; and if you should measure their condition by their afflictions, condemnation must be their portion, and they must be in the catalogue of delinquents, Have not some in our daies been slayed, roasted alive, cut in pieces, thrown into the river? have not their houses, and many in them been burnt together in *Ireland*? Have there not been cruell and desperate things done? *Ireland* now is full of blood,

sculs and graves; shall we say they are the greatest sinners that have suffered such great things? When *Pilate* had mingled the blood of some of the *Galileans* with their sacrifices, there were those that presently thought them greater sinners then the rest: but *Christ* that taught them and us, *Luke 13.* what use to make of judgements upon others, not to censure them, but to repent our selves; *Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish*; think not that they are greater sinners then others, think not now that the *Jewes* in *Babylon* are greater sinners then all others, think not those in *Ireland* are greater sinners then your selves. If he be a wicked man that meets with great afflictions, then *Christ* must be the wickedest man that ever was; for he was *vir doloris*, a man of sorrows, and had the greatest affliction that ever befell any. As it was no argument of *Zedekiah* his goodness, who at this time was in *Jerusalem*, drank wine in bowls, and had a great deal of felicity; so it was no argument of *Ezekiel* his guiltiness and sinfulness that he was in a strange land, in *Chaldea*, among the captives, by the river *Chebar*. *Paul* when he was at the bar with *Iron* fetters about his heels, was a better man then *Agrippa* with his Crown on his head, and his Scepter in his hand, and sitting in judgement to condemn him. *Daniel* in his captivity is said to be a man of desires, a man that God took great delight in; when *Ieconiah* a King, and dwelling at *Jerusalem*, is a despised broken Idol, a vessell in which there is no pleasure, *Ier. 22. 28.* Those that are in great affliction, may be greatly beloved, when those who are in great prosperity may be greatly hated.

Dan. 9.

8. That the wicked fare the better for the godly. There were many godly now in captivity, as well as there were many wicked ones, and because of the godly that were there, God powreth out the Spirit of prophesie upon *Ezekiel*, and by that means the very wicked come to have the benefit of this Prophecy, and partake of his visions. Many wicked ones have a share in the publike duties of Gods worship, when the godly meet together in those Exercises. *Ezekiel* in *Chap. 33. 32.* is said to be unto them as a sweet song of one that bath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; he war a sweet song to sweeten their bitter captivitie. *Ioseph* being in *Potiphars* house bringeth a blessing; and *Iacob* in *Labans* family increaseth the stock of his Master, and *Ioseph* in *Egypt* saveth the Egyptians,

Egyptians, and almost the whole world. Godly men and women are great advantages to the wicked, however they hunch and punch at them. Were the godly once out of the world, God would soon put fire to the four quarters thereof, and the wicked should presently feel it.

Which was the fifth year of King Jeboiachins captivity.

Touching *Jeboiachin*, there are many things remarkable :
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1. In *2 Chron.* 36. 9. it is said, that he was eight yeeres old when he began to reign; and in *2 Kings* 24. 8. it is said, he was eightene yeeres old when he began to reign. Here seemes to be a great difference in the Scripture, hardly to bee reconciled, and it hath puzzled many.

This difference is thus reconciled : The Kings of *Judah* when they were in imminent danger, did use to declare their sons to be their successors; and so *Jeboiakim* the father of this *Jeboiachin* being beset by *Nebuchadnezzar* about the second or third year of his reigne, did declare his son *Jeboiachin* to bee his successor; Now in the book of *Chronicles* he speaks of the time from the first declaration which was about the eight year of *Jeboiachins* age, and the book of the *Kings* mentions the time when he came to reign alone, and reckons from thence : For *Jeboiakim* reigned divers years after his son was declared to be King, and reigned with his Father. So that the one book speaks of the time he reigned with his Father, the other of the time that he reigned alone in the Throne.

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name to be joyned with the name of so wicked a King any longer. So here in *Ieconiah, Iab*, which is one of the names of God, is taken away, and in hatred and contempt he is called *Coniah*: God was taken from his name, and departed from him too. When God will honour a man, he addes letters of his own name to theirs; As *Abram* afterward was called *Abraham*, a letter out of Gods name was put into his; and so *Iacob*, his name was changed to *Israel*, a Prince of God, or one that prevails like a Prince with God.

Gen. 32. 28.

Magna benedictio eius pondus.

When God changeth names in mercy, and makes an addition of letters of his own name unto mens, it is an argument of Gods great love, of great esteem and great honour to the partie; but it is an argument of disgrace, when God either brands them, or detracts from their names. Thus God branded *Jeroboam*, *Jeroboam* the sonne of *Nebat*, that made *Israel* to sinne, and *Judas* the Traytor. And sometime he detracts from their names, as here *Ieconiah* is called *Coniah* the beginning and glory of his name is taken away; and he was (as *Coniah* signifieth) prepared of God, prepared of God for vengeance, prepared of God for a captivity, for base services, prepared of God to be a broken Idoll, to be cast out and despised, as it is in that 23. of *Jeremy*.

3. This *Jeboiachin* was written childlesse, *Ier. 22. 30. Write this man childlesse*. A heavy doom to write a man childlesse, especially, a noble, a royall family, when children are much desired by all, most by Princes, that so the Crown may not be alienated. *Ieconiah* is not written childlesse in regard he had not any child; for *v. 28.* it is said, *Wherefore have they cast out him and his seed?* Hee had seed, and yet was written childlesse. How is that? He was as one that had no seed, he was deprived of the benefit and comfort of his seed; in effect he was a childlesse man, because his children were carried into captivitie, and none of them did inherit the Kingdome and succeed him in the Throne; for it is said, *vers. 30. No man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Iudab*; they dyed in captivitie, and none of them did sway the Scepter of that Kingdome.

But there is some objection lying against this; For in *1 Chron. 3. 17. Salathiel* is said to be his sonne, and his sonne begotten in captivitie, *Mat. 1. 12.* If *Salathiel* bee his son, and his sonne begotten in captivitie, how then is this true that hee was written childlesse?

You

You must know (for answer) that this in the 1 *Chron.* and *Mat.* 1. is spoken after the legall account; for *Jeconiab*, or *Jeboiachin*, having been 37. yeares in captivitie (as you shall read afterward) he had seen the death of his sonnes and daughters, his unckles and kindred, so that he had none left of his own loins, or any that were very near unto him, to declare to be his successor and to inherit the Crown, therefore having neither sonne, brother, uncle, nor kindred that were neer unto him, he was as a man childlesse every way. Now *Salathiel* being his nearest kinsman alive, he declareth him to be heire to the Crown, and to succeed him in the royall dignitie, according to the order set down by God in case of the want of issue, *Numb.* 27. 8, 9. &c. And now this kinsman in the legall sense is said to be the son of *Jeboiachin*, that is, the Successor of *Jeboiachin*; not that he was his naturall son come out of his loines, for *Luke* 3. 27. *Salathiel* was the son of *Neri*, according to the naturall line. Be it then according to the legall account, that *Jeboiachin* was his father, yet still it holds good, *Jeboiachin* was a man childlesse.

4. In this King was ended the glory and royall dignitie of the house of *David*. It is true that *Zedekiah* reigned some years after him, but *Zedekiah* dyed before *Jeboiachin*: and in the genealogie of Christ, *Jeboiachin* is mentioned, not *Zedekiah*, neither is there mention of any more Kings of *Judah* after him; he was the period of the book of the *Kings*, and he finished the line of the house of *David*. None out of his loines, nor out of any other loines did sit upon the Throne till Christ came. As for *Zerubbabel*, who was thought to be King, and to sit upon the Throne after the captivitie, it will appear he was no King; for the learned observe that he was rather a Captain, Duke or Leader of the people, and was stirred up of God to further and finish the work of the Temple, after which (the Rabbins say) *Zerubbabel* returned into *Babylon* and there dyed.

But if that be not sufficient to cleare that he was no King, you may observe in *Zach.* 6. 11. that when two Crowns were made, neither of them was set upon the head of *Zerubbabel*, but both were set upon the head of *Jeshua*, the son of *Josedech* the High Priest; shewing that all the power was invested in the high Priest, and translated from Regall to Pontificall. So that *Jeboiachin*

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ebin was an unprosperous man, to lay the glory of the house of *David*, and of his own in the dust: And hence that name is conceived likewise to be given him, *Jer.* 22. 11. The name of *Sballum*, which commeth of a word, signifies to perfect, finish, or put an end to a thing, because he finished the Kingly government of the house of *David*. And although some put this name upon *Jeboahaz*, the son of *Josiah*, making him that *Sballum*, yet others understand it of *Jeboiachin*, and it is most probable to be him, because (saith the Text) he went forth out of his place and was not to return thither any more; and so did none but *Jeboiachin*, who voluntarily yeilded himself to *Nebuchadnezzar*: he was that *Sballum* that put an end to all the Kings of *Judah*, and laid the royall glory in the dust, and turned the government to the Priesthood, where it continued till Christ came and sate upon the Throne himself.

2 King. 24. 12.

5. His captivitie was long and sore, 37. years was he a prisoner in *Babylon*, as appears 2 *Kings* 25. 27. Others had there more libertie, they were not imprisoned, they had the benefit of the Prophets, advantage of all the Ordinances which were amongst them, those they had to sweeten their captivitie, with many outward comforts, whereas *Jeboiachin* lay in prison, and was deprived of them; his Crown, Throne, Scepter, Kingdome, Countrey, all were gone, and he is a captive imprisoned. A King, and a King of *Judah*, one that had lived so high, and been in such glory and great pompe, for him to lie in a prison, and in a prison in *Babylon*, not a few but twenty, almost fortie yeares; this is a thing observable in this King, and sets forth the constancy of his misery: He was one of *Josiahs* posterity, and it is observ'd that the posteritie of *Josiah*, who were Kings of *Judah*, in 23. yeers were carried four times into captivitie, whereas *Josiah* himself enjoyed 31. yeares in peace. And it appears thus, *Jeboahaz* his son, reigned three moneths, and then was carried away by *Pharaoh Necho* King of *Egypt*: after him *Eliakim* or *Ieboiakim*, another son of *Josiah* being made King, was taken by *Nebuchadnezzar* twice (as some observe) and carried to *Babylon*; and then if it were so, they were five times in captivity, but howsoever sure we are that in the 11 yeere of his reign, *Nebuchadnezzar* came up against *Jerusalem*, and took *Iebqiakim* and bound him in fetters to carry him to *Babylon*.

2 King. 23. 34.

2 King. 24. 1.

2 Chron. 36.
5, 6.

babylon. After him *Jehoiachin* whom we are speaking of, is set up and reigneth three moneths & ten dayes, who being young and fearfull, yeeldeth himself to *Nebuchadnezzar* that besieged *Ierusalem*, and was carried away together with many thousand others into *Babylon*: After him *Zedekiab* his uncle who reigned 11. yeares, and having broken his promise, violated his oath, and denying tribute to *Nebuchadnezzar*, is taken, his sons slain before his eyes, himself carried away to *Babylon*, and there he dyeth; and all this was within 23. yeares; for this *Zedekiab* reigned 11. yeares, and *Eliakim* or *Jehoiakim* 11. more, and the other two, three moneths apeece.

2 Kings 24. 10, 11, 12.

2 Kings 25. 7. &c.

From all this observe :

1. The different proceeding of God with Kings that are good, and Kings that are evill. Good Kings, as *David*, *Hezekiab*, *Jehosaphat*, *Josiah*, how precious are their names? how sweet are they? like an ointment powred out: how doe they keep up the glory of their houses? they are not written childless, they are not written men that shall not prosper; God doth not brand them with any note of infamy, nor detract from their names, they are not carried into captivitie. But for Kings that are wicked, how doth the Lord proceed in his anger against them, and make their names to rot; See it in *Abaz*, *2 Chron. 28. 22.* God sets an Emphasis, a starre upon him, brands him with a note of disgrace for all men to observe that read his Story, *This is that King Abaz*; What King was he? Even that King that in the time of his distresse did trespassse yet more against the Lord; that King that ruined himself and all *Israel* with him, that King that shook the foundation of Church and State; *This is that King Abaz*. So *Jeroboam* is branded. he is seldome or never mentioned but this is added to his name, *be made Israel to sinne*: So *Eliakim* a wicked King had part of his name taken away; and here this *Jehoiachin* is called *Jeconiah* and *Coniah*, a broken Idoll, a vessell in which there is no pleasure, a man that must be written childlesse, a man that must be carried into captivitie, and be imprisoned 37. yeers. Good Kings are the glory of the world, the glory of that State where they live: but these evill Kings in *Judab* and *Israel*, their memory stinkes, their names rot, their posteritie is cut off, their houses fall to the dust, and they have a foundation of wrath for their issue, if they have

any; four times within the compasse of 23. years, were they carried into captivity. God proceedeth against wicked Kings to the third and fourth generation, for their Idolatry and oppression, for the evils they countenance and maintain in their Kingdoms, and in his worship.

2. That afflictions are invalid to subdue corruptions. Five yeers they had been now in captivitie, and yet their corruptions were not mortified, all the hard things they had met withall, had not made them yeeld and stoop to God. *Jeremiah* had been Gods Hammer to batter them in *Ierusalem*, in *Sion*, and God had exercised them five yeares with his wrath in *Babylon*, and yet their iron, adamantine hearts were not broken, but *Ezekiel* must be stirred up now in the fifth yeer of *Iehoiachins* captivitie, a Prophet that must be the strength of God to break them, that must lay on load and not spare. You see then that afflictions of themselves do not kill corruptions, they doe not breake the principle of stubbornnesse, and strength of rebellion that is in the hearts of men and women.
- 2 Chron. 18. Nay, sometimes it proveth so, that afflictions make us the worse,
22. like waters being restrained they swell higher and threaten heaven it self, so corruptions being restrained, they swell and threaten the ruine of States, Families, of soules and bodies to all eternity *Isai. 1. 5. Why should yee be stricken any more? yee will revolt more and more.* Let God come with a plague to a Citie, with a sword to a sinful Nation, let God come with any judgement, the judgements themselves will never doe us good, unlesse there be something added to the judgements, unlesse they be sanctified to us; our proud stubborn hearts, our vile natures will stand it out against God, even when the sword is in his hand.

Ezekiel the Priest, the Son of Buzi, &c.

Wee are now to come to the subject of the vision, set down in the first verse indefinitely *I*, in the third specially, *Ezekiel* described from his office, a *Priest*, and from his parentage, the sonne of *Buzi*. *Iosephus* and some others, conceive the time of *Ezekiels* transmigration to be in *Iehoiakims* dayes, but others make it to be in the daies of *Iehoiachin* the sonne of *Iehoiakim*, when he and so many thousands were carried away by *Nebuchadnezzar* into *Babylon*.

Babylon, 2 Kings 24. 10, 11, 12. Then was *Daniel*, *Mordecai*, the three Children likewise, and *Ezekiel*, carried into captivity, as sundry affirme. And that he was then carried into captivity, is evident from the Text it selfe, for in the 40. Chapter of this propheticke, *vers. 1.* it is said, *In the 25. yeer of our captivity*; he joyneth himselfe, and doth not say *their*, but *our captivity*, and therefore was then brought into *Babylon*, when *Ieconiah* was, and from that time began the captivity, and the reckoning of the 70. yeares. Now he began to propheticke in the fifth year of the captivity, thirtie-four yeares after *Jeremy*, who began in the 13th year of *Josiah*, and had prophesied long, but done little good amongst them, they were so obstinate in his dayes; God stirreth up *Ezekiel* and sets him a work, and he prophecieth 22. yeares, as we may gather out of his own prophecy, *Chap. 29. 17.* *In the 27th year the Word of the Lord came unto me*: It was five years before he began to prophecy, and 22. years after wee hear of his prophecyng. He might prophecy longer, but we finde it not recorded in holy Writ.

If it be demanded, What became of this Prophet *Ezekiel*? Antiquitie tels us that his end was very lamentable, and yet like a Prophets; for usually the Prophets came to untimely deaths. *Adrichomius* saith, he was torn in pieces with horses. *Albanasius* tells us, he was killed for the peoples sake. *Epiphanius* relates that he was slaine by the Ruler of the people for reproving his Idolatry. *Chrysostome* in his 46. Homilie upon *Matthew 23.* and those words, *O Ierusalem, thou that slayest the Prophets, &c.* saith thus; *O Ierusalem*, I have sent to thee *Isaiah* the Prophet, and thou hast sawen him afunder; I have sent thee *Jeremiah*, and thou hast stoned him to death; I have sent to thee *Ezekiel*, and by dragging him amongst the stones, thou hast dashed out his braines. All agree in this, that *Ezekiel* came to an untimely and bloody end; and so did most of the Prophets and Apostles. What ever mens ends were in killing the Prophets, God had other ends; That by their blood and death, the doctrine they delivered, being sealed, might passe the better; that none should look for great matters here in this world when such great Worthies were so ill intreated; That men might bee stirred up by their example, to stand for the truth unto the death; That it might be a demonstration of the judgement to

come; seeing they were used so hardly here, surely it follows then that there is a time wherein God will call over things again, and recompence the sufferings of his Prophets, and be avenged on those that had done them such wrong. God had such ends as these.

Hence note;

1. The wisdom of God, that touching the lives and deaths of the Prophets and Apostles, speaks little. There is not much said in the Scripture touching them, and why? Lest we should attribute too much to them, and too little to God. Wee are apt to look at the pen, rather than at him that made the pen, puts in the inke, and writes with it. We looke at the instrument, and neglect the principall agent. Since the lives and deaths of Martyrs and holy men came into request, God hath lost too much of that honour hath been due unto him; creatures have had it.

2. See here the ingratitude of the people, that doe not only kick, but kill their Prophets, not only mock, but murther their Prophets. *Isaiah* is sawn asunder, *Jeremie* stoned, *Ezekiel* his brains are dashed out; Oh the ingratitude of the sons of men, that doe thus requite God for the Prophets he sends to them, that break the earthen vessels for bringing them heavenly treasures in them!

Ezekiel the Priest.

He was both of the Propheticall and priestly dignitie, which was not common, very few of the Prophets had this honour. The Hebrew Word, is a Sacrificer; the Greek signifieth as much: one that medleth with holy things, that offereth sacrifice for sinne. Priests were of high account, both among the *Jewes* and *Gentiles*: Among the *Jewes*, great was the honour the high Priest had; and the inferiour Priests had their honour likewise; None might take this honour to himselfe, but bee that was called of God, as was *Aaron*, Heb. 5. 4. They had the charge and command of the Sanctuary, and of all things that did appertain to the House of God. The *Jewes* and their *Rabbins* doe tell us, that there were twentyfour severall sorts of gifts appointed of God for the Priests, all which are set down in their law expressely, and are mentioned by Mr. *Ainsworth*, upon *Numb.* 18. 19. Among the *Hew*

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then

thens also they were very honourable; *Patipherab* was a Priest of *On*; the *Chaldee* faith, Prince of *On*, because though a Priest, yet he had Princely dignitie.

The Priesthood you know, was intailed upon the Tribe of *Levi*, and it is very observeable what was the occasion of it, *Exod.* 32. When the people had sinned in Idolatry, and grew seditious and tumultuous, *Moses* stood in the gate of the Camp, and said, *Who is on the Lords side? Let him come unto mee.* Whereupon all the sons of *Levi* gathered themselves together unto him, with their swords by their sides, and presently executed the commands and counsell of *Moses*, and slew every man his brother, companion, neighbour, *v.* 27. They were one of the least, if not the very least Tribe of all the twelve, yet were they not fearful, or backward unto this work, but ventured themselves among the people, shewing great faith & zeal to vindicate Religion, and the glory of God. This fact and forwardness of theirs was so well taken of God, that it brought a choice blessing upon them and theirs; God fully rewarded them for it: for whereas a curse was threatned against *Levi*, *Gen.* 49. 7. *I will divide them in Jacob; and scatter them in Israel*, yet this curse was turned into a blessing, and they are exalted to be neer the Lord in the holy things of the Temple that did appertain to his worship and service; for after they had finished that execution upon the people, the Text saith, *vers.* 29. That *Moses* said to them, *Consecrate your selves to day to the Lord, because every man hath been against his son; and against his brother, that the Lord may bestow upon you a blessing this day; and thereupon they were taken into the place of the first born (that did all before) and had the Priesthood settled upon their Tribe, together with a choice blessing, which is recorded, Deut.* 33. 8, 9, 10. And of *Levi* he said, *Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one; Blessè Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands, smite through the loines of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.* Here was the occasion of *Levis* being taken into the Priesthood, and to serve with God, and to serve for ever.

From hence take this note which is very considerable: That it is good to appear in the cause of God, and to be forward to vindicate his honour and glory, to stand for him and his People: It is good to vindicate GOD when he suffereth in his worship, in his servants,

servants, in his cause any way. The Tribe of *Levi* was forward to vindicate God, and God rewarded them, they had a blessing that day : So *Phinehas* hee was zealous for God, *Numb. 25. 10, 11.* *Phinehas* (saith God) hath turned away my wrath from the children of *Israel* while he was zealous for my sake among them, wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my Covenant of peace, and hee shall have it, and his seed after him, even the Covenant of an everlasting Priesthood, because he was zealous for his God. If we shall appear in Gods cause, and venture our selves in his quarrell, we shall never lose by it. *Peter* was a man forward, he put forth himself for Christ, he would be first speaking; when Christ had said, *Whom do you say that I am?* saith hee, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* and presently Christ fastned a blessing upon him, *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonas, flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church.* Men that go upon good grounds, and will lift up Gods Sabbaths, Worship, Honour out of the dust, though they do hazard lives, estates, or limbs, God will remember it, and they shall be recompenced. You shall finde in *Judges 5. 18.* That *Zebulun* and *Naphtali* were a people that jeopardded their lives unto death in the high places of the Field; They went forth, and stood for God and his people against *Jabin* and *Sisera*, that came against *Israel*, and threatned ruine: And in *Matth. 4. 13, 14, 15.* when Christ cometh, hee preacheth the Gospel first to them; God remembreth their kinnesse, and rewardeth it, though it were long before: So you may lay the foundation of a mercy for your posterities a hundred yeers hence. This should put us on to appear in the cause of God, whensoever we see Idolaters, and the enemies of God lift up their heads, and strike at truths, and God in his Ordinances and servants; put forth your selves, God will remember you, though you jeopard your very lives.

The Sonne of Buzi.

Ezekiel was neither the servant nor the son of *Jeremiah*, as some have fancied, but the son of *Buzi*. This *Buzi* was a Prophet, if the rule of *Jerome* and the Rabbins be true. *Jerome* saith, when a Prophet nameth his Parentage in the beginning of his Prophecy,

Filium Prophetæ se asserere.

revisi

it is to affirm that he was the son of a Prophet; and so say the Rabbins likewise, That man was a Prophet, whom the Scriptures set down to be the father of a Prophet. Then *Buzi* here who was the father of *Ezekiel* a Prophet, by these rules was a Prophet himself. But this is the voice of men, not of heaven.

His name signifieth contempt, disgrace, a man contemned, scorned, despised in the times and places where he liveth. You may hence note:

1. That the Prophets and Ministers of God have alwaies been subject to derision and scorn, *Isai. 8. 18. I and my children are for signes and wonders in Israel.* If the Vine do bear such ill fruit, what then doth the Thorn bear? If there be mocking and scorning of the Prophets in *Israel*, what reproaches, what taunts and bitter sarcasmes will there be then in *Babylon*? *2 Chron. 36. 16. They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets;* They counted them teachers of lies, false prophets, seditious, factious, such as delivered strange doctrines, plotted treasons, &c. nothing was too vile, too bad to lay upon the Prophets and the sons of the Prophets. *Zedekiah* smote good *Micaiah* on the cheek, and *1 Kings 22. 24.* saith he, *Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? Thou fool, thou silly man; thou mad man, thou false fellow, thou deceiver of the King and people, which way went the Spirit of God from mee to thee? and so smites him on the cheek;* Now to smite on the cheek was a proverbiall speech among the *Hebrews*, and it was a sign of the greatest disgrace that could be done to any. This was the condition of the Prophets, while they were here in the world; And also of the Apostles, *We are made as the filth of the world, and off-scouring of all things to this day.* *Paul* a great Scholer, full of the Holy Ghost, called by an extraordinary way, yet he saith of himself, and the rest of the Apostles, that they were counted as the off-scouring of all things; men get up all every where, on every side, so the word carries it: the men of the world were like unto a man that raked every where to get a basket of filth, dirt and dung to throw in some ones face; so they scrape in the doctrines, lives and passages of the servants of God, do catch at all advantages, do seek every where to pick up something, that they may have wherewithall to upbraid, reproach and revile them; and we are made as the very filth and dung upon the face

*Signum maxime
ignominie.*

1 Cor. 4. 13.

ὡς πρὸς ἀπομυκτὰ

face of the earth. Was not *Hus*, that Worthy of God so counted when the Prelate (who had the power of ordering things) had put a paper crown on his head with three ugly shaped Devils upon it, and this Title over their heads, *Heresiarcha*, Here is the Diabolical Heretick, that great Heretick that hath three devils in him; and when they sent him away to the stake with this farewell, *Go thy waies, we commit thy soul to the Devill*; Was not here a man made the filth of the world? Even such mockings, such dealings, such doings must the servants of God look for while they are here. They are the sons of *Buzi*, they are *Buzies* indeed, men of contempt and scorn among wicked and vile men.

2. That whom the world contemneth, God will honour. Here is a *Buzi*, a man of contempt in the world, but God giveth him a son, and a son who is a Prophet, and a son whose name is recorded in Scripture, together with his own, all honourable things. *Hannah* was scorned, reproached by *Peninnah*, but God giveth her a *Samuel*, and honoureth her with the motherhood of such a son. *Joseph* was thrown out by his brethren, cast into the pit, sold to *Potiphar*, put into prison, but God did lift him up in Egypt, and set him almost in the Throne, made him the next man to the King himself: Christ was the stone disallowed and rejected by the builders, even the Master-builders, the great ones, the Rabbies, the Pharisees, but God makes him the chief corner stone, God sets him up on high. This is for the comfort of those that are godly and thrown out by the world, God will take them up and put honour upon them in a way they know not of.

From the Subject we come to the things fell out, with the author of them, and they are these:

1. Heaven is opened.
2. Visions are presented.
3. They are seen of *Ezekiel*.
4. The author of them is specified, *Visions of God*.

The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

The word *opening*, among the Jews, notes sometime, not the reality, but the effect of a thing. *Gen. 3. 7. Their eyes were opened; they were not shut before, but now they saw that which they saw not before*

before, & so their eyes are said to be opened. In the Gospel, Christ is said to open the eyes of the blind, the ears and mouth of the deaf and dumb, not that their mouths were absolutely shut, or their ears absolutely stopped, or their eyes so closed that they could not stir their eye-lids; but Christ opened them so, as hee made them to see, hear and speak, to do that which they could not do before; so that in regard of the effect they are said to be opened. Sometimes again it noteth the truth of a thing; and so Stephen saw heaven opened, and Christ standing at the right hand of God; and Peter saw heaven opened, and a sheet coming down to him.

The question is, whether of these wayes it is to be taken here? Origen saith, That the heavens were open to the eyes of his body, there was a division of the heavens, and so in a literall sense hee saw the visions, and the things presented to him; But Jerome saith, *Non divisione firmamenti, sed fide creditis.* The heavens were opened, not by the rending of the firmament, but by the faith of the beleever. You may take it in the literall sense, and according to the truth of the thing. The inconvenience objected against it is not considerable: for it is said, if the heavens were literally opened, how could Ezekiel see so far, as to see things in heaven? the strength of his eyes could not reach it; for if the Sun and fixed Stars which are far above the Sun, are greater bodies then the earth, and seem so little unto us, how little would any thing in heaven seem to the eye, when it is exceedingly beyond both these?

Ans. The heavens being opened, it doth not follow that Ezekiel must see the visions in heaven, the things he saw might be neerer then the Stars or Sun. The Dove came down and lighted upon Christ, and the sheet was let down from heaven unto Peter, and so the visions might be neerer unto Ezekiel then the highest heavens; The heavens were opened, and he saw visions of God, it is not said that he saw visions in heaven; and grant it to be heaven, Stephen saw Christ there, and so might Ezekiel see the object of his vision there: yet neither did Stephen by his naturall strength see Christ, nor Ezekiel these visions, but he that opened in heaven did open their eyes, strengthened them to see at such a distance: Or, Secondly, you may take it effectively, that was done to the eye of faith; as if heaven had been opened. A thing is said to be opened when that is removed which hinders coming at the thing

*Ubi discussis
omnibus obsta-
culis Deus facit
ut fideliū oculi
usque ad glori-
am ipsius exle-
stem penetrant.*

*Nova acis, aper-
tis oculis.*

shut up, the seven Seals were loosed, Rev. 5. then was the book opened, when the shuts of the window are turned aside, that the eye can come at the light, then the window is open, the impediments are taken away: and heaven is open, when all lets being set aside, God causeth the eyes of his to see divine visions, or reveals divine mysteries unto them, as if heaven were open; and this is the way most peculiar to the servants of God. Hereafter. (saith Christ) *You shall see Heaven opened, and the Angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man.* The Angels are not corporeall, they cleave not the heavens asunder in their descent, or ascent, that is not the meaning, but the spirit of the Text is this: the impediments should be taken away from their minds, they should be so enlightned with the glory of the Gospel, they should see, as it were, even Angels come down and minister unto Christ: they should as the expression is, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *with open face behold as in a glasse the glory of God, see heaven opened in Christ, and the Angels descending upon the Son of man; And so did Ezekiel see heaven opened.*

Observe. The Key of Heaven is in the hand of God, he openeth heaven at his pleasure, and letteth out and in, what parties and things he pleaseth; Angels, visions, and other things he lets out; he openeth heaven, and letteth in your prayers, your tears, your souls at his season; the key of the grave, the key of the womb, the key of the clouds; the key of hel is in the hand of God, and he turns them at his pleasure; but above all, the key of heaven is in the hand of God, he is Lord Chamberlain, there is none goeth out, nor comes in, till God himself turn the key. If you would have mercies, you must look up to God for them, & desire him to turn the key, Rev. 3. 7. he is said to have the key of David, he opens and none can shut, he shuts and none can open; a key notes power, and the key of David, chief power in the house, in the Kingdom; where that key is, there is the greatest power; God hath that key in his hand, the key of David, all power to open and shut heaven when he will, he can open your hearts at his pleasure, he can open Texts at his pleasure, he can open dark things unto you; therefore seeing all power is in the hand of God, look up to him for mercies, and desire him to turn the key for your good and his glory.

2. *That God doth great things for those that are truly godly, that are true believers. Heaven is opened for them, and only for them.*

Wee doe not reade in the book of God, that heaven was
ever

ever opened for any wicked man, wickednesse shutteth up heaven, godlinesse hath the priviledge, to the godly heaven is opened. To Christ it was opened, *Mat. 3. 16.* To Stephen, *Act. 7. 56.* To Peter it was opened, *Act. 10. 11.* To John it was opened, *Rev. 4. 1. 19. 11.* And it is opened to Ezekiel here in the Text, *I saw heaven opened.* It is shut against others, wicked men shall never see it open in mercie; the Judgement at last shall not be in heaven, but in the aire, or on the earth. It is the priviledge of beleevvers to have choice mercies.

Great things God will doe for them that the world shall have no share in. It was the godly that saw Christ after the resurrection, and not any wicked man. It was for beleevvers that Christ prayed, and not for the world, *Joh. 17.* It is for the heirs of salvation that the Angels are sent forth to be ministring Spirits unto, *Heb. 1.* And it is for the faithfull the heavens are opened, that they may see what the glory of their Fathers house is, unto what a familie they shall ere long bee received. This sets out the excellency of faith unto us; for as it is a hand to receive Christ and his benefits, a mouth to eat his flesh, and drinke his blood; so it is an eye to see into heaven, and the eye for which heaven is opened.



EZEK. I.

The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God, &c.

The Word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the Priest, &c.

And the band of the Lord was there upon him.

And I looked, and behold a whirlwinde came out of the North, a great Cloud, and a fire infolding it selfe, &c.

I saw Visions of God.



OD hath manifested himself unto his Prophets severall waies.

1. By speaking immediately unto them without interposition of any medium, even mouth to mouth, and face to face. So he spake to Adam in Paradise; to Moses, *Exod. 33. 11.* The Lord spake to Moses face to face, as a man speaks

speaks to his friend. This manner of Gods manifesting himself was peculiar to Moses above any, or all the Prophets besides, as you may read *Deut. 34. 10.*

2. God manifested himselfe to his people by Dreames, which was in the night season : there was some representation of something unto them when they were asleepe. Thus God manifested himself to Jacob, *Gen. 28. 12.* And Jacob saith, *Gen. 31. 11.* that the Angel of God spake unto him in a dreame.

3. God hath manifested himself to his people by Visions ; *Psal. 89. 19. Thou speakest in visions to thy holy One.* And *Gen. 15. 1. The Word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision.* These three you have together in two verses, *Numb. 6.* and part of the 8th. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my self known to him in a vision, and speak to him in a dream ; and to Moses will I speak mouth to mouth.* Here in the text it is by way of vision that God speaks or appeares unto Ezekiel ; *I saw visions of God.*

In a Vision there are these things :

1. There is some species or similitude represented to the sight, whether it be to the eie of the body externally, or to the eie of the minde internally, alwayes something is represented to the eye.

2. A Vision of something that is future, whether at some little distance, or very remote. Hence it is that Vision is put for Prophecy, *Isa. 1. 1.*

3. In a Vision there is alwaies such an irradiation of the mind, such divine, satisfying, overpowering, strong light, that the party who hath the Vision is put out of all doubt and dispute concerning the truth of the thing he hath seen, or is represented.

4. There is in a Vision a strong impulse upon the spirit of the partie to doe that which is the minde of God concerning that vision.

5. It is when they are awake. God speaks to men by dreames in the dark when they are asleepe, but usually visions are when men are awake.

All these are found here in the Prophet Ezekiel's vision :

1. There are representations of diverse things to him, he was an

an Hieroglyphicall Prophet, he had more things presented unto him of that nature then any Prophet besides: All that followeth here in this Chapter are representations of things to Ezekiel in this vision.

2. It is of things to come; for this Propheſie being either of the ruine of *Jerusalem*, or of the ſtate of the Church, ſtill it was of that which was not preſent but future.

3. The Prophet he had ſtrong enlightnings, he had ſuch irradiations of his minde that he was ſatisfied touching the thing, therefore he ſaith, *The word of the Lord came expreſly unto him*, the hand of the Lord came upon him in a great deale of ſtrength.

4. He had a mighty impuſe, though he was backward, unwilling to goe on in the worke of God, yet the Spirit came upon him with power, and put him on.

And laſtly, it was when he was awake, walking up and downe by the river *Chebar*, there he had theſe viſions.

Thus much for the nature of a viſion; now theſe viſions were viſions of God. *I ſaw viſions of God*. Not that he ſaw God oft, and ſo every ſight of God made a new viſion, (for no man can ſee God and live) but viſions revealed to him by God, which did in ſome meaſure ſet out the glory and majeſty of God; and ſo they are called viſions of God.

Or viſions of God by way of oppoſition and excluſion, thus; I ſaw viſions of God, I had divine viſions, not Satanicall deluſions; (for Satan hath his Prophets, and they have their viſions where-by they delude the world) not dreams and conceits of mine own, no Angel, no Devill, no dream, no fancy of mine preſented them unto me, but they were Prophetickall viſions, ſuch as God himſelf hath preſented.

Or viſions of God laſtly, in regard of the eminency of them. *I ſaw viſions of God*, that is, choice, rare, difficult, transcendent viſions. Things that excell, in Scripture-phaſe uſually are ſaid to be things of God; As the Mountains of God, the Cedars of God, the City of God; as you may read *Pſal. 36. 6. Pſal. 80. 10. Jonab*

1. Obſerve here the certainty of the things contained in this Prophet. He doth not ſay, *I heard*, but *I ſaw viſions of God*. The ſenſe of ſight is the moſt certaine, moſt active, moſt diſcerning,
moſt

*Quantum oculi
ab auribus.*

most evidentiall of all the senses. Therefore 1 Job. 1. 1. 3. *That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, we declare unto you.* There was certainty in that which they saw. One eye-witnesse is more then ten heare-sayes, then ten eare-witnesse. *Thales* being asked the Question, *How much truth should differ from a lye?* his answer was, *As much as the eyes differ from the eares:* intimating, that what you heare may be false, but what you see that is certaine. The Prophet here saw *visions of God*, to shew the certainty of these visions, and so of the whole Scriptures, which are *visions of God*.

Ne tamen fides.

2. See here the dignity of these Visions, they are *visions of God*, such as are great, glorious, transcendent things. Mens words, works, things are meane, poore, and worthlesse, but the things, the *visions of God*, they are so high, so excellent, that few can reach them, they are beyond the apprehensions of ordinary men: yea the Prophets themselves did not see all that was in those visions, God did vouchsafe unto them. This shews, the things of God have transcendency in them, are of great authority, and challenge answerable esteem. These are *visions of God*, and must with all Scripture be valued accordingly. Hence the Ancients have called the Scriptures, *An Epistle of God sent from Heaven to the sons of men*. Therefore in them is nothing impertinent, empty, but all in them is glorious, full of sense, mysteries, and Spirit; this strengthens the authority of Scripture, that our faith may not stagger at all, but be confident, and build upon them, as visions and truths of God.

3. See here, that when God beginneth once to let out mercy to his servants, he flints not presently, but proceeds, I saw not one vision, but *I saw visions of God*, he had many choice ones. It was kindnesse that *Ezekiel* had such a name, *The strength of God*; it was kindnesse that the Lord would open heaven to him; it had been great kindnesse if he had seen but one vision; but for *Ezekiel* to have heaven opened, and to see visions of God, many visions, one after another, this sheweth the great kindnesse of God. When *Rachel* had her first son, she called his name *Joseph*, which signifieth adding, or increase; for she said, *The Lord shall adde to me another son*. Gen. 30. 24. Now God hath begun to shew kindnesse, he shall not only give me this, but he shall give me another son also.

When

When the Lord hath bestowed one mercy on you, you may name it *Joseph*, increase, addition, for God will bestow another upon you. *Abraham* had many mercies from God, one after another; and *Moses* a multitude of mercies, he converseth with God face to face, he heareth God speak, he hath Gods presence to goe along with him; yea, he seeth all Gods goodnes and glory to passe before him. When mercies come forth, God will not presently shut the door of mercy again: Heaven is opened, visions are presented one after another. *Psal. 36. 10.* Continue thy loving kindnesse, the Hebrew is, draw forth, or, draw out thy loving kindnesse: A metaphor either taken from vessels of Wine, which being set abroach once, yeeld not only one cup, but many cups: so when God setteth abroach the Wine of his mercy, he will not fill your cup once, but twice and seven times: or, taken from a Mother, who hath her breasts full of milk, draws them out for her childe, not once, but often; the childe shall have the breast many times in the day, and many times in the night: so when God beginneth to shew mercy to you, he will draw out his breasts of consolation, and will bestow mercy after mercy upon you: or from a line which is extended; for so God being in a way of mercy, will extend the line of mercy, and measure out mercy after mercy for you. Is not heaven now opened? Doe you not see visions of God this day? How often is heaven opened in this City in a week? How many visions have you from the Prophets? What manifestations of truths are there? what discoveries of the minde and will of God to your souls are there in these dayes? *I saw visions of God*, saith *Ezekiel*, and so may you.

The Word of the Lord came expressly.] The Hebrew is emphaticall, היה הוה
the Word of the Lord by being, hath been, or, hath altogether been, had much Essendo fuit, com-
being in me. Besides the visions I saw, there was a reall communi- nino fuit fiendo
cation of truths to my understanding; evident and expresse com- factum est.
mands from God came unto me, and it came so, as it had entrance and abiding in me: *Accurate factum est*, there was an accurate and reall worke of it upon me, and in me. *Prov. 3. 24.* Keepe חושיה
sound wisdom; the word for sound wisdom in the originall is, that which is essence or being; intimating, that all other things are nothing; and the Word of God, that hath only substance and being

being in it, making substantiall where it comes, and so here it gave being, and was an ingrafted word in the soule and heart of the Prophet; so that the meaning is, the Word came with that evidence and clearnesse unto me, that I could not withstand it, it had such entity and substance in it, that it made me of a common man a Prophet.

And the hand of the Lord was there upon me.] The hand of the Lord is taken in two senses, especially in Scripture:

1. For judgement, or punishment, so you have it, *Act. 13. 11.* speaking of *Elymas* the Sorcerer, saith *Paul*, *The hand of the Lord shall be upon thee, and thou shalt be blind*; Gods hand was upon *Elymas*, and he was stricken blind for perverting the Deputy. In this sense it is not taken here.

2. The hand of the Lord is taken for Prophecie; When the Lord doth come upon the sons of men, and stirs up their spirits to prophecie, that is the hand of the Lord.

But yet this is not all: It noteth the vertue and power of the Spirit of God which came upon the Prophet; not shaking, disturbing, and throwing of him downe, as some Rabbies conceive, but changing, comforting, elevating, and exciting the spirit of the Prophet to see divine mysteries; and notes also, that efficacie and power which did set on the Word upon the heart and conscience of the Prophet; that power which did subdue all opposition, carnall reasonings, and remove all impediments whatsoever stuck upon the heart of the Prophet, and hindred him in that worke which God would have him to undertake; It is this hand of the Lord that makes the Word mighty, spirituall, lively, according to that in *Heb. 4. 12.* the Prophet felt the intrinsecall vertue of this hand, the Spirit of God in his owne heart; it was a quick and lively word unto him. This intrinsecall vertue of the Spirit, if it reached not the Prophets hearers, yet it abode in the Prophecie, and it remains an efficacious Prophecie to this day. It's worth inquisition, what the vertue of the Spirit is, expressed here by the hand of God.

There are three things in it: The hand is,

1. *Symbolum roboris.*
2. *Index veritatis.*
3. *Instrumentum operationis.*

1. The hand is *Symbolum roboris*, the Type or Embleme of strength; therefore of a strong man, we say he is a man of his hands, that is the symbol of his strength. So the Spirit of God is a Spirit of Strength, the hand of God notes the strength of God, and the Holy Ghost is the power and strength of God, Luke 1.35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: And greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world.* The Spirit of God that is in the hearts of his children, he is of more strength then Beelzebub, the prince of Devils, and god of this world.

2. The hand is *Index veritatis*, the hand or finger doth shew a thing; If you would have a man goe this way or that way, you shew him or point him with the finger, you direct him with your hand: Solomon, Prov. 6.13. speaking of the wicked man, saith, *He teacheth with his fingers*; that is, he shews others by his hand to doe wickedly; the Spirit of God is, *Index veritatis*, this hand of God doth shew you the truth, Job. 16.13.14. *He shall shew you, saith Christ, things to come, He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you*; It is the Spirit of Christ, this hand of God that sheweth you all things; you will never know truths till this hand point to them, and teach you: you may have notions in your head, and guesses in your spirits and bosomes, but the reality and certainty of things will never be attained to, till the Spirit of God acquaint you with them.

3. The hand is *Instrumentum operationis*, the instrument of action; men do all by the hand, therefore it is called the Organ of organs by the Philosopher. So the Spirit of God that doth all, Zach. 4.6. *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit: I will doe all by that, saith God*: It is the Spirit of God that doth convince; it's the Spirit that doth convert; it's the Spirit that doth dictate and inspire godly men; it's the Spirit that sanctifies; it's the Spirit that leads into truth, that comforts; the Spirit is the great agent, the hand of God by which God doth all his works. It was the Spirit that moved upon the face of the waters at first; the Spirit of God was the agent in the work of Creation, and the great agent in the work of Redemption and Salvation.

These phrases being thus opened, observe hence:

1. That the Prophet received what he delivered to them from
I God;

1 Cor. I. 1. 23.

God ; *The hand of the Lord was there upon me, and the Word of the Lord came expressly.* The Prophets must deliver to the people what they receive from God, and not what they bring of themselves : They must not bring their own visions, their own conceits, what seemeth good in their own eyes ; but they must bring the Word of the Lord to the people ; They must not speak according to the humours of the people, as they move them, as they would have them, but they must speak as the Spirit of God moves them, as God will have them, 2 Pet. I. 21. *The holy men spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost :* and Paul saith, *What I have received of the Lord, that I deliver unto you ;* he would not deliver any thing he had from the world, or from himself, but, *what I received from the Lord, that I deliver unto you.* Ministers they are Gods Seedsmen, and they must have their seed from God, else they will sow tares.

2. It is of much concernment for Ministers, to see they have a good and clear call to their Ministry. Ezekiel here stands much upon it ; *I saw heaven opened, I saw visions of God, and the Word of the LORD came expressly to mee, and the hand of the LORD was there upon mee.* Here were strong evidences of his Call to the work he was to go about. Ministers are to be the mouth of God to the people, and the mouth of the people to God, both are weighty businesses ; they deal about the eternal truths of the eternall God, your immortall souls, and the everlasting condition of them. The glory of God is concredited in a great measure unto them ; the great things of the Kingdom of Christ are put into their hands, to dispense as God shall move, and give them opportunity : Had they not need therefore to see to it, that their call be right, and to make it out strongly and clearly, that God hath sent them ? If they can clear it up that God hath sent them, they may expect his assistance, his blessing, his protection and successe in their labours. How ever things prove, this will be their comfort in the midst of opposition, reproach, persecution, hazard of liberty and lives, I was called of God, I am in his work, in his way, he brought me into his Vineyard, hee will stand by me, I will go on, let him doe with me what he pleaseth. The clearness of a mans call will add much comfort to a mans spirit in a black day ; it makes conscientious, pitifull and painful ; a Ministers call being evident, the peoples consciences will be satisfied, will receive his doctrine ;

doctrine; then will they look upon him as their Pastor and Teacher reverence him for his works sake, and are likely to receive much good by him: Whereas otherwise, if the calling of Ministers reach no higher then a Patron or Prelate, there is seldome any good comes either to Ministers or people; therefore it concerns them to look narrowly to it, that their calling be of God, clear and strong to themselves, else they cannot make it out to others; neither shall finde that comfort, nor do that good which otherwise they might.

3. That in corrupt times, when Religion, the Church, and Gods glory are greatly endangered, God then takes care to raise up some extraordinary servants to vindicate his truth, his people, his glory; all was brought now to a desolate condition, false Prophets prevailed, religion suffered, Gods honour was low, and now God takes *Ezekiel* that was one of the ordinary Priests before, and bestowes a larger measure of his Spirit upon him, and raiseth him up to be a Prophet, and sets him a work, to do great things in *Babylon*. Though now men be not called immediatly by the voice of God and Christ, as of old, yet by extraordinary instincts and motions of Gods Spirit, they were heretofore, and are still put upon great services: *Philip* was a Deacon by his ordinary calling, but by extraordinary instinct and hints of Gods Spirit, he was raised up to be an Evangelist, and to do greater service unto the Church of God. So *Luther*, that was a Frier at first, by extraordinary instinct of Gods Spirit, was raised up to purge errors out of the Church, and to glorifie God, especially in clearing the doctrine of Justification by Free grace: So *Zwinglius*, *Wickliffe*, and others in our dayes; God hath not left himself without witness at this day, he hath stirred up the spirits of some to do him great and extraordinary services.

4. That those Ministers are fittest to speak to the people, that finde the Word of God to have being in them. *The Word of the Lord came expressly to me*; the Word of the Lord had being in him, was ingrafted in him. When the Word is a word of being in our hearts, then it will be a word of power in your consciences. That which comes from our hearts, will reach to yours, and will be effectual in you; otherwise the Word is but an empty sound, it cometh from the teeth outward, and reacheth but to your

cares, and seldome goeth downe into your soules.

5. Take this note, that there are principles of opposition in the dearest servants of God to the worke of his Spirit. It is said, *the hand of the Lord came upon me; invaded me*, so some render it. I stood out against God, I had my carnall reasonings, I had stubbornnesse and opposition in my will; I said there was a Lion in the way, and I pleaded here against this worke and service. But the Spirit of God came upon me, came mightily upon me, came with a strong hand upon me, as he saith, came so upon me, that it subdued all my carnall reasonings, subdued the stubbornnesse of my will, it removed all my shifts and pretences, and brought me off to go about the Work of God; Is it not thus with most Christians? when you would pray, when you would doe good, is not evill present with you? But when the Spirit of God cometh upon you, it will overcome that indisposition, that sluggishness, that opposition, it wil work down distempers and frame you sweetly to go about the work of a God, as it did *Ezekiel*.

6. That the Word and Ordinances of it, that visions and revelations do the heart of man reall good, when divine vertue goes along with them, otherwise not. What if *Ezekiel* had seen never so many visions; what if God had spoken never so expressly unto him; unlesse the hand of God had been upon him too; unlesse the Spirit of God had improved those visions, and ingrafted those words in him, all had been as an empty sound, all had been as meer shadows and sights to him. But when the Spirit of God goes along, then there is efficacy and benefit in any Ordinance; take away the Spirit from the Word and Ordinances of God, and they will be but dry bones; without meat or marrow: take the Gospel which is called the ministration of the Spirit, if the Spirit be not in it, the choicest promises, the sweetest truths there, what are they? they are *Litteræ damnatoriae*, and *Leges mortis*, they are letters and laws of death to the soul. When the hand of the Lord is upon an Ordinance, and upon a man in that Ordinance, then is there good gotten, and then doth the soule gain, 2 Cor.

10. 4. *Our weapons are mighty through God.*

7. That all spirituall good received and done by the Saints, is from the operation of Gods Spirit, which therefore is called Gods hand. *Luke 11. 20. If I by the finger or hand of God cast out devils;*

ESTIM

21

this

this finger, *Mat. 12. 28.* is called the *Spirit of God*; *If I by the Spirit of God cast out Devils.* That which is called *finger* in one, is called the *Spirit* in the other. Now doe men receive any good? have you faith? have you love, patience, meeknesse, understanding, zeal, godlinesse, any, all graces? It is this hand of God that hath wrought them. Do you do any divine good unto others? It is this Spirit of God that works by you, and inableth you to doe that good. *Act. 6. 10.* *They were not able to resist the wisdom and Spirit by which he spake.* Stephen spake by the Spirit of God. If you heare, if any good be done, or received, it is from the Spirit, which is the hand of God. Therefore you should know, to whom to give the glory and honour of all your receipts, and of all your actions.

8. Note here; That the Messengers of God should come not onely with the Word of God, but also with the hand of God; they should bring his truths and his Spirit. *Ezekiel*, the Word of the Lord came expressly to him, and the hand of the Lord was upon him. It is needfull that Ministers come not onely with Law and Gospel, with the word of God, but that they come with the very hand, even the Spirit and power of God; for all the efficacy and good done, is by the Spirit. If a Minister come and bring the letter only without the Spirit, what evidence will there be to his own soul, of the certainty of those things whereof he speaks? How will he be able to see into the spiritualnesse of them, to know that they are of God, and that they are to be commended to the people in the name of God, when he wants the Spirit of God to discern them himselfe? What prevalency can there be in the hearts of hearers, when the Minister comes not with demonstration of the Spirit? What bottome is there for the faith of men, where there is the wisdom of words, without the power of the Spirit? The hearers get most good when Gods letters come to them not without his seale, evidencing they are his letters. Hence saith Paul, *1 Cor. 2. 4, 5.* *My preaching was not with enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* Then doth the faith of hearers stand in the power of God, when the Ministers come with evidence and demonstration of the Spirit of God.

Last

Last of all, From these three verses generally considered, observe; That when Gods servants are in deep afflictions, then are usually brought in the sweetest consolations. Here is *Ezekiel* taken out of his own Country, deprived of his estate and friends, of the Temple, of Gods Ordinances and solemn Assemblies, and of all the sweet and good that *Jerusalem* afforded: He is brought into *Babylon*, he is a captive there; he is solitary now by the River side, he was in a distressed and forlorn condition. What man here would be in *Babylon* now, and not think himself very miserable? When *Ezekiel* was in this condition, heaven is opened, visions are seen, God speaks expressly unto him, the hand of the Lord is there upon him. So that you may see, when we are in deep afflictions, many times God cometh in with his sweetest consolations, *Gen. 15.1.* *Abraham* in the Chapter before had gotten a victory, and rescued *Lot* his brothers son, out of the hands of sundry Kings, and being come home, he falleth into a shaking fit, and is filled with fear lest those Kings should re-inforce their strength, come upon him and his, and destroy all. While he is in this agony, God commeth to him; *Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield and exceeding great reward.* God came in his deep distress, and brought in a sweet refreshing to his soul. *Elijah* that great Prophet and worthy servant of God, after he had made a sacrifice of *Baals* Priests, and *Jezabel* sought after him to slay him, and had vowed that he should die the death, if there were no more men in the world, he was forced to flee for his life, and he flieth into the Wilderness, and there was a great famine, neither bed nor bread he had there, and whither to goe he knew not, he had many enemies, he hardly knew a godly man left, he was even weary of his life, now he sitteth down under a Juniper tree, and desireth that God would take away his life; *It is enough now, O Lord,* (saith he) *take away my life, for I am not better then my fathers;* I am even willing to die, the world is so wretched, and there's so much hatred of thee and thine, *Abab* and *Jezabel* are against me, all the Countrey and land cry out of me as the troubler of *Israel*, and to what purpose should I live any longer? while he is in this condition, God sendeth an Angel unto him, and an Angel with bread to feed him, and with glad tidings to comfort him. *Jobn* when he was in *Palmas*, banished by *Domitian*, in a place where were the condemned parties belong

belonging to the State of Rome; those that were the most desperate and vile wretches, that they would fain be rid of, they sent them to *Patmos*: *John* was there, and while he was there, he had those revelations that were full of glory and excellency. The three Children, when they were in the fiery furnace, the fire did them no hurt, but loose their bands and set them at libertie, and then one like the Son of God commeth and walketh amongst them, and comforteth them in those fiery flames. In deep distresses then God doth often let out himself: he dwelleth in the darknesse, and letteth out himself, and becommeth light to those that are in darknesse. You know that passage in the Book of Martyrs, of *Glover* and *Austen*, *Mr. Glover* was sad, and full of feares some daies before he was to suffer, his spirit was down, he quaked and trembled to think of the stake; and of that bitter cup he was to drink, he was afraid that he should deny his Saviour, and undoe his soul. But the night before he was to suffer, he cryed out unto *Austen*, *Ob Austen, he is come, he is come.* I knew a woman in travell, and in that travell whereof shee dyed, who had been sometime in darknesse, and having much sought God and waited for the revelation of his countenance, when shee was almost spent in her travel and come near her end, upon a suddain shee sprang up, and fixing her eyes towards heaven, said, *He is come, he is come, he hath kissed me with the kisses of his mouth; his love is better then wine, I will not exchange my condition with the greatest Prince in the world; the Lord is infinitely good, he hath not deceived me; neither will hee ever deceive any.* Shee had these impressions upon her spirit, till the breath went out of her body. Thus God in great distresses, in deep afflictions, bringeth in seasonable and sweet consolations.

Mistis A. G.

And I looked, and behold, a whirlwinde came out of the North, &c

Wee are now come to the Vision: some make five Visions in this Chapter.

The first is a Vision of a tempest, in this fourth verse.

The second is of the four living creatures, with their description, from this verse to the 15th.

The third is of the wheels, from the 15th verse to the 21.

The fourth is of the Firmament, from the 22. verse to the 26th.

The

The fifth is of a Throne with one in it, from the 26. to the end.

Some others put them all together, and make them one Vision; these being all parts of it.

Before I come to open this Vision, or any parts thereof, it will be needfull to shew you the scope of this Vision, which will help us in the understanding of the same.

The scope of this Vision is to set forth the glory of God; and this appeareth from the last verse of the Chapter, where it is said, *This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.* The Spirit interprets all to be a manifestation of the glory God.

This glory of God is evidenced two ways :

1. By his powerfull providence in the administration and ruling of all the creatures in the world ; For all creatures are under the command of God, and he doth dispose of them for what services he pleaseth, and not onely in the world, but specially in the Church is his active providence, preserving, and destroying, as seemeth best in his owne eyes, so that nothing is done there rashly, or without his will; nothing otherwise, sooner or later then he hath decreed; all creatures, actions, events, come under his will, rule, and power.

2. By a representation of Jesus Christ, the Judge and Governour of this world, who is the brightnesse of the glory of God, and the expresse image of his Person; and this from the 22. verse to the end of the Chapter ; as the other is from the 4. verse to the 22.

This glory of God is presented to Ezekiel in this Vision, for these ends :

1. To breed in him an high reverence of divine Majesty. The sight of great and glorious things doe awaken our dull, heavy, sensual spirits : naturally we are indifferent to the things of God, and unlesse something transcendent and glorious be presented to us, like *Gallio*, we care little for other things : therefore in *Exod. 19. 16.* when the people saw the lightning, and heard the thunder, when God came down upon the Mount in that glorious manner, this awakened them, and bred an awfull reverence in them of divine Majesty; *All the people that were in the Campe trembled.*

2. To prepare and fit him for entertainment of what God should speak unto him. We are not alwaies in a frame to heare God speak, there are great distempers in our spirits: you have all experience enough of the truth of this: therefore it is said, *Psal. 46. 10. Be still and know that I am God*; Be still, let not your spirit be in a rage, taken up with the world, the cares, feares, pleasures, and busineses of it, be not parling with a lust, but be still and know that I am God.

3. It is to encourage him to his work, and to frame his Spirit to a ready execution thereof. *Ezekiel* was to enter upon a heauey task, he was to deale with the stubborn *Jewes*, a rebellious people. He knew that *Jeremiah* had preached 35. yeares, and other Prophets in times better then he was in, and little or no good had been done upon this hard-hearted people. Therefore lest *Ezekiel* should be discouraged, that his heart might not faint, but bee quickned to the work, the Lord doth shew him his glory in these Hieroglyphicks, his glory in these creatures, his glory in his Son, that so seeing the glory of God, he might be warm'd, oyl'd, and encouraged to run about this work. For the sight of glory is potent with a gracious heart, to make it active for God. *We cannot* (says *Peter* and *Iohn* in *Act. 4. 20.*) *but speake the things which wee have seen and heard.* Now they had seen his glory as the glory of the onely begotten Sonne of God. They had been in the Mount, seen *Ioh. 1. 14.* *Christ* transfigured, and *his face shine as the Sunne.* And having *Mat. 17. 1, 24* seen his glory and heard his voice, this encouraged them, notwithstanding all difficulties, to be active for him. This was Gods way to appear to his servants, to encourage them to the worke he would let them about. God appeared to *Moses* in a burning bush. To *Ioshua* in a Vision like a man with a sword in his hand. To *Elisba* by horses and chariots of fire. *Peter* being confirmed by a Vision of a sheet let down from heaven, goes and preacheth to the *Gentiles*. And *Ezekiel* here hath vision upon vision, that so being strongly confirmed, hee might not fear the faces of *Jewes* or *Babylonians*, but proceed with life and spirit about the work he was sent. *Exod. 32.*
Iosh. 5. 13.
2 Kings 6. 17.
Acts 10.

Note: The sight of Gods glory is very efficacious upon the spirits of men. If God let out his glory, it will work strangely upon good and bad. When they came to apprehend *Christ*, saith he

Joh. 18. 6.

Ila. 6. 5, 6.

Job 42. 5, 6.

*Videntis Deum
omnis creatura
est angusta.*

to them, *I am he*. It is conceived that Christ let out some glimpse of his glory, this did so astonish them that presently they recoyled, and fell to the ground. *Isaiab* when he saw the glory of the Lord, he cryeth out, *Woe is me, I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips*. And then God manifesting his glory so far for his good, that his lips were touched by an Angel; *Now Lord* (saith he) *here am I, send me*, I am ready to goe, though it be on a message of death, though it be to root up Nations and Kingdomes. So it was with *Job*, *I have heard of thee* (saith he) *by the hearing of the eare, but now mine eye seeth thee*, (that is, thy glory) *Wherefore I abhorre my selfe in dust and ashes; I will speak no more against God, I will doe whatsoever thou shalt command or expect at my hands*. So *Isa. 40. 5, 6*. *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together*: And what then? *All flesh is as grasse, and all the goodlineffe thereof is as the flower of the field*. There is no greater or more efficacious way, to take off your hearts from the creature, then to behold the glory of God. There was no man that ever saw the glory of God, but he looked upon the creature as nothing afterward.

I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the North, &c.

A Lapid.

In this Verse we have the first part of the Vision, and it is of a Tempest; A whirlwind is a sudden wind, which takes up what is obvious, and carrieth it in a circular motion, wheeling it about, and hurling it here and there. *Theodoret* calls it the blast of a storm; the *Septuagint*, a wind which takes away trees, houses, lesser things, and disperseth them. Some have been eye-witnesses of whirlwinds in *Italy*, which have taken away *stabula cum equis*, stable with horses, carried them up into the air, and dashed them against the mountains; so mighty are these whirlwinds in some countries.

Out of the North.

The Northern winds are very piercing; and if we respect the Prophet in this whirlwind, it was to purge the air, that the visions might be clearer and more conspicuous to his eyes, and himself

self better disposed to the reception of them; for Southern winds make the humors fluide, and the bodie heavie, they relax the sinews, and prejudice the motions of the man: But Northern winds shut up the humors, consolidate the parts of the body, intend the spirits, make man more lively, fit to receive and do.

Bacon's Naturall
Historie.

But there is something else in this North-wind; great difference there is among Expositors concerning this vision, and no man almost knoweth where to fasten; what I conceive to be the truth you shall have.

By this whirlwind from the North, is meant *Nebuchadnezzar*, with his army that should come and besiege *Jerusalem*, *Jer. 1. 13, 14.* this is set out under the representation of a seething pot; I saw (saith he there) a seething pot from the face of the North; (so the Hebrew is) and what is that? Out of the North an evil shall break forth upon all the Inhabitants of the Land; The evil is, The Families of the Kingdomes of the North shall come against *Jerusalem*, *vers. 15.* There is the evil; the *Babylonians* shall come to *Jerusalem*, and be a wind, a whirlwind, a tempest to it.

Nebuchadnezzar and his Armie are compared to a whirlwind, in the sudden rising, swift-going, and terrible execution.

1. In the sudden rising, winds (you know) rise suddenly. *Act. 2. 2.* Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, which sheweth that winds do come unexpectedly. *Jonab 1.*

4. No sooner was *Jonab* in the Ship, but God sent out a great wind upon the Sea, such a wind should *Nebuchadnezzar* be, he should come suddenly upon them. *Jer. 6. 26.* The spoiler shall come suddenly upon thee: *Habak. 2. 7.* Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee? and awake that shall vex thee? A metaphor taken from a Dog, Serpent, or wild Beast, when a man passeth by the way, before ever he thinks of it, the Dog, Serpent, or wild Beast starteth up, bites, or stings him, so should *Nebuchadnezzar* be, (for hee speaks of him in that second of *Habakkuk*), he should come suddenly and set upon *Jerusalem*, and overthrow it as a mighty storm and tempest doth a tree, or house.

How could this be sudden, when the Prophets had foretold them of it long before?

To this I answer, first; That because they did not believe what the Prophets did foretell, touching *Nebuchadnezzar* and his destru-

tion of *Ierusalem*, therefore it was sudden to them, though foretold. *Lam. 4. 12.* The Kings of the earth, and all the Inhabitants of the world would not have beleev'd that the Adversary and the Enemy should have entred in at the gates of *Ierusalem*. Neither King nor people would beleve the Prophets, they would not be perswaded that ever an Enemy should enter within the gates of *Ierusalem*, and lay it waste.

2ly. Though they were foretold, though they did believe it, yet because they were not prepared for it, when it did come, therefore it was sudden unto them, *Luke 21. 34.* Take heed, leaſt by any means your hearts bee overcome with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſſe, and that day come upon you unawares: though men believe that evil ſhall come, if they be taken unawares, unprepared, it is ſudden to them. So theſe either not believing, or not being prepared, though they did believe, the coming of *Nebuchadnezzar* was to them as a whirlwind very ſudden.

2. In its ſwift going; the wind is ſaid to have wings, *2 Sam. 22. 11.* becauſe of its ſwiftnesse and ſpeedy motion; and Ships that are driven by it, are ſaid to be ſwift, *Iob 9. 26.* And ſo it is ſaid of the *Chaldean* horſes, that they are ſwifter then Leopards. *Hab. 1. 8.* Leopards are very ſwift creatures, ſo ſwift, that *Claudian* faſtens this Epithet upon them, *Pardi fulminei*, Leopards are as ſwift as lightning and thunder; and therefore *Dan. 7. 6.* *Alexander* is compared to a Leopard, becauſe of his ſpeedy conquering the world. Celerity in matters of war is of great moment: And it would do well, that thoſe that are now intereſſed in it, would make more ſpeed; for ſpeed doth great things. *Alexander* being aſked the queſtion how he overcame the world in ſo little time, answered, By not delaying: every opportunity was taken. Theſe *Chaldeans* and their horſes were very ſwift, and they came with great ſpeed upon *Ierusalem*, and therein reſembled the wind.

3. In its terrible execution: A whirlwind, or any wind which bringeth a tempeſt, what dreadfull work doth it make? Houſes, Mountains, Trees, Steeples, are ſhaken and torn in peeces; what can ſtand before a tempeſtuous wind? You may ſee the power thereof in *1 Kings 19. 11.* A great ſtrong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks. The ſtrength of rocks and mountains was weakneſſe to the ſtrength of the winds; thoſe great veſſels

vessels at Sea, viz. Ships, when a storm cometh, how are they battered and shaken, sunk and split against the rocks? There is terrible execution done by the winds at Sea and Land, when they are in their strength. So *Nebuchadnezzar* and his forces were very terrible: *Habak. 1.6.* and so on, we may see the terribleness of them; *I will raise up the Chaldeans, a bitter and bawdy Nation; and verse 7. They are terrible and dreadful: And verse 9. They shall come all for violence, their faces shall sup up as the East-wind: that wind was most vehement and scorching in Judea, and devoured all that was green; so did the Chaldeans devour and destroy all their pleasant things; they shall gather the captives as the sand. The wind drives great heaps of sand together, raiseth a mountain presently, so should they gather the captives as heaps of sands. Then afterward, verse 10. They shall scoff at the Kings, and the Princes shall be a scorn unto them, they shall deride every strong hold, for they shall heap dust and take it. No person, no hold can stand before them. In these respects Nebuchadnezzar and his armie are compared to a whirlwind, and a whirlwind out of the North.*

A great cloud.

Clouds are moist vapours exhaled from the earth and Sea by the Sun, and condensed by the cold in the middle region, and carried by the winds up and down, this way and that way: they are the bottles of heaven, which God doth fill with Wine or Vinegar, with Mercy or Wrath. This cloud here likewise doth represent the same thing again unto us; *Nebuchadnezzar* and his army, chiefly, his army. In the Prophets *Ezekiel* and *Jeremiah* oftentimes his army and himself are compared to a cloud, and that in three respects.

1. Clouds cover the face of heaven, many vapours gathered together, rise up and darken the Sun, and keep from us the comfortable aspect thereof *Ezek. 32. 7. I will cover the Sun with a cloud.* The same Word that is used for a cloud, doth signify likewise a multitude, a great company. *Livie* speaks of a cloud of horse-men and foot-men; and *Epiphanius* speaks of a cloud of Flies; another of a cloud of Locusts; and the Apostle speaks of a cloud of witnesses: and here you have *nubes militum*, a cloud of souldiers,

Ier. 4. 13.

Peditum equitumq; nubes.
Heb. 12. 1.

fouldiers, and this cloud doth cover the face of the earth; this armie of *Nebuchadnezzar* doth cover the land, 2 *King.* 25. 1. It is said, that he and all his host came against *Jerusalem*; all the *Militia* of 127. Provinces: and *Hab.* 1. 8. *their horsemen shall spread themselves, they spread themselves through the country, Ezek.* 39. 9. *Thou shalt ascend, and come like a storm, and shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee.* It is expressly meant of *Nebuchadnezzars* army, which should be so great, as that it should cover the earth. The *Talmud* expounds those words, they shall be like a cloud to cover the earth, of *Nebuchadnezzars* covering the land with his army.

2. A cloud is so swift, as that it is irresistible; it powres out the rain and none can let; it will keep its way, go on, or break it self in pieces. *Isa.* 60. 8. *Who are these that flie as a cloud?* clouds flie so swiftly, that there is no resisting of them. So this army of *Nebuchadnezzars* went with that swiftness and irresistibleness, that it was not in the power of any to withstand them, neither *Joakim*, nor *Jeboiachin*, neither *Zedekiah*, nor *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, four Kings could not withstand this *Nebuchad*: and many other heathen Kings that he had to deal with all, none of them could resist him and his forces; he went on invincibly, strong holds were nothing to him, he made heaps of dust, and took them at his pleasure.

3. Lastly, clouds are Emblemes of misery and afflictions; and the Hebrew word for a cloud signifieth also calamity; for clouds are full of waters, hail, fire, lightning, and thunderbolts, they send down such things upon the sons of men, as fill all with darkness, fears and troubles; it's naturall for a cloud to be an Embleme of misery, for clouds bring storms and tempests. The day of the Lords wrath in Scripture, is set out by clouds, frequently, *Zeph.* 1. 15. *That day is a day of trouble and distresse, a day of darknesse and gloominesse, a day of clouds and thick darknesse:* So *Joel* 2. 1, 2. *Ezek.* 30. 2. and 34. 12. So this army of *Nebuchadnezzar* is fitly compared to a cloud, because of the misery and calamity came along with it. Great miseries have gone along with all armies, but specially with this, *Hab.* 1. 6. They were a hasty and bitter nation, they rained down their wrath upon *Jerusalem*, they had instruments of death, they sent out their thunder and lightning, and burnt the House of God, the Kings House, and every great mans house in *Jerusalem*;

Hab. 1. 10.

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Ierusalem, 2 Kings 25. 9. A terrible storm was now upon *Ierusalem*, when they shot their arrows into the City, slew multitudes, burnt down all, and carried the people into captivity ; what a storm was it ? Lo here God storm'd *Ierusalem* with *Nebuchadnezzar* his armie ; and what are armies but clouds of blood and fire, the great ordnance of God, out of which he shoots thunderbolts of death, *Isa.* 28. 2. and by which he storms the strongest towns ?

I. Observe here ; That winds, clouds, and all vapours are subject to the power of God. Hee calls them forth at his pleasure, and carries them which way he pleaseth, to execute his will ; he sent the whirlwind, and the great cloud ; these lawless creatures, over which no King, no Nation ever had command, (for who can command the winds or the clouds ?) yet God hath absolute power over winds : *Prov.* 30. 4. *He gathereth the wind in his fist*, he can open it, and let out a wind where and when he will, to shake the foundations of the earth : He hath the waters in a garment, covered up in a cloud, he only can powre them out, and make great floods ; He is the father of the great rain, *Amos* 5. 8. *He calleth for the waters of the Sea*, (that is, the vapours whereof the clouds and rain are made) and powreth them out upon the face of the earth. It is God that lieth upon the wings of the wind, *Psal.* 18. 11. It is God that rideth upon the clouds, and makes them his Chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind ; *Psal.* 104. 3. It is God that rideth upon the swift clouds ; *Isa.* 19. 1. God hath the use of the winds as a Fowl of his wings, and can flutter and make a great or small wind as he pleaseth ; God hath the command of the clouds as a Prince of his chariot, to drive it which way he pleaseth.

If you have a wind at Sea or Land to do you good, remember that it came out of Gods hand ; remember God rides upon that wind, and carried it that way you would have it : If the clouds, the bottles of heaven, be carried over your Gardens, Orchards, Lands, Habitations, Cities or Countries, do water them and make them fruitful, remember that God rideth in those Chariots, that he openeth those bottles of heaven, and lets down that which is sweet and comfortable to the sons of men : If they prove terrible unto you ; If there be a storm and tempest, remember it is
God

God that sends the storme and tempest. All is in his hand.

2. That it is Gods prerogative to impose higher significations upon things, then they have by nature. This whirlwind out of the North, this great cloud, naturally had no other signification then other clouds and winds; God lifts them up to a higher honour and makes them to represent *Nebuchadnezzar* and his Army, his own wrath and vengeance in that *Nebuchadnezzar* and in that Armie of his. It is Gods priviledge to put things into a higher condition then they have by nature. No man, no Prince on earth could have put this signification upon that whirlwinde. The Rain-bow was before the flood, but had not that honour to be a witness betweene God and man, that God would never drowne the world any more, till God himselfe impos'd it. The brasen Serpent was no more then other brasse, but by divine institution it was made a type of Christ. Where such institution is not, no creature can be translated to another or higher condition then that it was set in by the first creation, without sin. To make garments signifie purity, crosses Christ crucified, (besides the superstition and injurie in thrusting them out of their ranke) it's a presumptuous stepping into the Throne of God, and a bold usurpation of his Prerogative; it belongeth unto him to impose significations of a higher nature upon the creature then ordinarily it hath.

3. That the anger of God which way soever venting it selfe, makes a storme and a terrible tempest. God was about to pow'r out his wrath by *Nebuchadnezzar* and his Army; and this prov'd such a tempest, as ruin'd *Jerusalem*: this verified *Psal. 11. 6. Upon the wicked be shall rain snares, fire and brimstone; and an horrible tempest, the portion of their cup.* When Gods wrath once breaks out, it will be terrible to all it falleth upon.

What therefore will wicked men doe when God shall come out like a whirlwinde, when God shall come out as a great cloud, thunder, lightening in the world, rain fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest? When God shall doe this, what will become of them? Wicked men in *Ezek. 13. 10, 11.* are compared to a wall that is daubed up with unt tempered mortar; When God shall come with a tempest and shake that wall, can it stand? No; it's said it shall fall, a stormie winde shall rende it. The *Jews* daubed

bed with untempered mortar, and when the storme came, they fell; many Christians daube up themselves with the untempered mortar of their own righteoulnesse, of vain hopes, of doing this and that. But when this whirlwinde blows, they will downe. *Mat. 7. 27.* They are houses built upon the sand, and when the winds blow, the floods beat, and the rain falls, they will fall also, and fall from the hopes of heaven to the bottome of hell. Therefore look to your foundation, look that you be not built upon the sand, but upon a rock, and that you daube not with untempered mortar, for there is a tempest already begun.

4. That God can bring aduerse power from any quarter, he can raise wind and clouds from the North, from remote places, those we little thinke of; he can make use of a hastie, bitter and merciles Nation, and that suddenly, to awaken a secure people, to correct his own servants, and to plague his enemies. It's likely they had such thoughts at *Jerusalem* as these; Surely *Babylon* is a great way off, *Nebuchadnezzar* hath his hands full, none of the Kings of the earth will or dare come near *Jerusalem*: *Lam. 4. 12.* Wee are in no such danger as these timorous Prophets speak of; Why should we trouble our selves with needlesse fears? we will on in our wonted wayes; and are not such as these our thoughts? doe not we thinke that forreign enemies are so imployed and taken up at home, that they have no leasure to come and trouble us? But God can from the North bring a tempest, God can from forreign Nations bring in those that can poure out their wrath upon us, and make as grievous a storm as ever fell upon *Jerusalem*. We doe not beleve, and they did not beleve. But what if God doe not bring it from abroad, cannot hee raise up a storm from within? Is there not already a winde out of the North, a whirlwinde and a cloud raised? and how soon doe any of us know but there may be blacknesse, darknesse, and the day of the Lord round about us, we may be suddenly invironed with winds and dreadful stormes, such as our hearts never thought of, and our eyes never saw? Let us not be secure, a bloodie tempest is amongst us already. The drunkard may be secure when he is at Sea asleep upon the top of the Mast, (though it may cost him his life for doing so) but a sober man will look about him when he seeth the Ship shaken, and heareth the winds blow; and perceives the waves

rise; and if it bee possible, save his own life, and the Ship too. If you be sober men, look about you. Is not the storme begun? Do not the windes blow? Are not the clouds dark? Is not the day of the Lord upon us? If it be possible save your own lives, and the Ship that you are in that now begins to shake, to sinke. The heathen Mariners had so much religion, that when there was a storm every one cryed to his God; and so much charitie, as not to suffer *Jonah* to lie asleep, but goe to him and say, *Awake thou sleeper, what meanest thou? arise, call upon thy God, that if it may be, he may save both thee and us.* Be not you behinde the heathen Mariners, shew so much religion and charitie in you, as every one to go and call now upon his God. Cry to your God now, that he would still the windes; That he would rebuke the waves; That he would still this storm. Cry to God now with all your strength, and wrastle with him night and day, that he may shew some mercy to his Beloved, and not give her up to be a spoil to the hands of enemies. Awaken your *Jonahs* that are asleep in your houses. Call upon husband, wife, friends, Minister, all, and every one to put to their hearts and hands, to secure this Ship that is almost now split and falling in pieces. Now take your censers, for wrath is gone out from the Lord: put fire and incense in them, that if it be possible, you may stop the wrath. When the Disciples were at Sea, and a storme arose, Christ being with them asleep in the Ship, they awok him, saying, *Lord save us, we perish.* So doe you, Christ seems to be asleepe, awake him with your prayers, and say, *Lord save us, we are called by thy name, wee are Christians, save us; else we perish.* Christ you see presently arose, rebuked the winds, and the Sea, and there was a great calme. Be not secure now of all times, but thinke with your selves what you would doe if all the Nations of the world were come against *England*, if all the Counties in *England* were in an uproar, if this Citie were besieged and fire thrown into it to burne the houses. Thinke what you would doe then, doe it now, fit and prepare your selves for the stroak of God in the storm and tempest, that how ever it goe with your bodies, estates, liberties, or lives, yet it may goe well with your immortall soules.

5. That God disposes of winds and clouds for what services he pleases. A whirlwinde is made *Elijahs* Chariot to heaven,
2 Kings

2 Kings 2 11. The Lord hath his way in the windes, *Nab.* 1. 3. He answered *Iob* out of the whirlwinde, *Chap.* 40. 6. By a winde he conveys the holy Ghost to the Apostles, *Acts* 2. 2. So for the clouds, God sets his bow in them to witnesse the securitie of the world from drowning, *Gen.* 9. He created a cloud upon the Assembly, *Isa.* 4. 5. He went before the *Israelites* in a pillar of a Cloud, *Exod.* 13. And the glory of the Lord appeared in the Cloud, *Exod.* 16. 10. The Temple was filled with a cloud, 2 *Chron.* 5. 13. A cloud received Christ and carried him to heaven, *Acts* 1. 9. When wee behold the clouds, and hear the winds, we should be carried higher in our thoughts, then to look at them philosophically in a naturall way, we should minde them Theologically, as instruments of choice services of God, as instruments of his power, wisdom, and glory.



V E R S. 4.

And I looked, and behold a whirlwinde came out of the North, a great Cloud, and a fire infolding it selfe, and a brightnesse was about it; and out of the middest thereof as the colour of Amber, out of the midst of the fire.

A fire infolding it selfe, &c.



Fire infolding it selfe: or, as the Hebrew word is, a fire
that doth put forth it selfe, and receive it self into it self; like
unto a wave of the Sea that riseth high, and falleth
into it self again: or as in an House on fire, the fire

שֶׁנֶּחֱמָה
מִתְקַבֵּץ
Ignis se invol-
vens, Mont.

breaks forth strongly, and the flame returns into it self presently.
The *Septuag.* render it *bright shining fire*, wch comes out of a cloud,
viz. lightning; and however some think it not to be meant of
the lightning, because lightning goeth straight forth, and never
returneth

שנ
מתלקחת

returneth, according to that, *Mat. 24. 27. The lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West, and so doth not infold it self;* yet we have Scripture to confute this conceit: *Exod. 9. 24. there was fire mingled with the hail, the same word is in the originall, fire that doth infold it self:* And they that curiously observe the lightning, may find that it doth oftentimes return into it self and passe (as it were) as a ball in the air, or as wound up into a Globe. But this reacheth not the meaning yet in the Text, *A fire infolding it self:* *Sanctius* thinks it rather a herie Globe which remain'd in the clouds; and like Cabbage leaves grow up into themselves, and infolding, make a Globe; so the flames of this fire turned into themselves and became a globe; and its probable to be this, because its said, there was a brightness round about it, the fiery globe within begat that circular brightnesse, which lightning being transparent could not do; and the rather it's thought to be this then lightning, because the colour is said to be as the colour of amber, whereas if it had bin lightning, that is transient, and the colour hardly observable; therefore it should seem to be some fixed thing; I conceive it to be vapours in the clouds, kindling and burning into themselves, the flame turning inward, and making a globe; and thus I find it expounded, A fire kindling it selfe: and so it is most natural to the cloud to have vapours in it, which fire and kindle themselves, and burn into the form of a Globe, Now what is meant by this fire infolding it self, or this fiery globe is very doubtfull; they that come nearest to the truth, take it to be the wrath of *Nebuchadnezzar*, or rather the wrath of God in using *Nebuchadnezzar* to burn the City and Temple; but with submission to the judgement of the learned and godly, I take the fire to be meant of sin, the sins of Prince and people, Priests and Prophets did kindle and involve them in the fire, their own sins took hold of and consumed them. *Prov. 5. 28. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall bee bolden with the cords of his own sinne:* A mans sins will turn upon him, take hold of him and bind him; and so here *Jerusalem* sins kindle upon her self, take hold of her and burn her: sin we find in Scripture cometh up to the nature of fire, *Prov. 16. 27. In the lips of the ungodly there is a burning fire;* and its likened to fire, because of the destructive nature; whatsoever fire takes hold of, it consumeth; and

Ignis se accendens, ShinJI.

and so doth sin: *Job 5. 2. Wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one: and Prov. 1. 32. The turning away of the simple shall slay them.* So then *Jerusalem's* sins, the sins of Kings and Nobles, the sins of Prophet, Priest, and people, are here to be understood by this fire infolding it self, which drew the wrath of God into *Jerusalem*, and so kindled, fired, and consumed them all.

From hence note, *That the cause of Kingdomes, Cities, Prince and peoples ruine is in themselves, their owne finnes are the fire infolding: Hos. 13. 9. O Jerusalem, thou hast destroyed thy self, thou art the cause of thine owne spoil and captivity, thou hast set up the Calves, worshipped them, and they bleat so against thee, that they have undone thee. Israels sin was Israels destruction; and so Jerusalem; it was not the whirlwind, nor the cloud; not Nebuchadnezzar or his army, that could have made one breach upon Jerusalem, or led one soul into captivity, if there had not been sin amongst them, it was their own sin which kindled divine wrath, and brought in their destruction, otherwise they had been safe enough; Jerusalem might have stood to this day, been as great and glorious as ever.* The principles of our ruine are in our selves: Iron breeds the rust, garments the moths which devour them. The ill humors in a mans body, fire and consume the house by a burning feaver; children breed the worms which bring them to their graves; and States the sins which bring them to their ends; where sin is bred and countenanced, it Proves *consumptio totius*, Families, Cities, Kingdomes go down where sin goes up. Let not kingdoms therefore blame God or others, but let them and all say, The root of the evill is in our selves, we should never be laid wast, if we were true to God, faithfull and close to the rule; if wee did not sin, there would be no fire to consume us and ours.

A brightnesse was about it.

There being a Globe of fire within, it sent forth beams which produced an answerable brightnesse; which brightnesse (the cloud being thick and dark of it self) was a window to let in the Prophets eye to see what was in the cloud:

By this brightnesse is shadowed out unto us, the terrible Majesty and glory of divine presence, putting it self forth in the punishment

nishment of sinners: As fire begets a Splendor round about where it is; so do the judgements of God set out to the world his glory, justice, holinesse, *Psal. 9. 16.* The glory of his judgement in punishing ill doers, is a solid, constant, spreading glory, as that brightnesse was not flashie in the cloud, occasioned by the lightning, but fixt, certain, and on every side.

The Note hence is, *That Execution of justice upon Delinquents makes God and Magistrates glorius;* There was a bright splendor in the cloud, *Exod. 15. 6.* upon the destruction of Pharaoh and his army in the red Sea, it's said, *Thy right hand, O God, is become glorious in power, thy right hand, O God, hath dashed in pieces the Enemy, and in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee.* This act of justice was a glorious and powerfull work; so when God destroyed the *Bethshemites*, *1 Sam. 6. 20.* *Who is able to stand before this holy God, say they?* The holinesse of Gods justice and power shine so clearly in the world, that they dazle mens eyes and hearts, and makes them tremble before God: when *Phineas* executed justice, how honourable was he in the hearts of the godly? what a great and glorious reward did he get by it? Never was *Solomon* more honourable then when he executed justice between the two Harlots, and called for the sword to decide the controversie; our Magistrates are clothed with scarlet, and they may think that makes them honourable, but their robes never bring true honour to them if justice bee not done: one act of justice executed upon delinquents, makes them more honorable then all the scarlet robes in the world. How glorious and dreadfull was the Parliament, when that great man fell in *Israel*! And if justice were executed upon delinquents, and they had their due, we should be glorious in power, dreadfull to nations, terrible to our enemies, they would say, *Who is able to stand before the God of this Parliament? before the God of this Kingdom?*

Strasford.

Out of the middest thereof as of the colour of Amber.

חושן

That is, out of the middest of the fire, not out of the middest of the wind, or out of the middest of the cloud. The Hebrew word for Amber, is a word that is found no where else in all the Scripture

ture but in this Prophet, and but twice more, viz. at the 27th verse of this Chapter, and at the second verse of the 8^h Chapter. *Rabbi Iarchi* confesseth he knoweth not what the meaning of this word is; another *Rabbi* saith it was the name of an Angel, who instructed *Ezekiel*. The *Septuagint*, *Jerome*, and divers others translate it *Electrum*, amber; and because here is mention of the colour of Amber, we must inquire what Amber this was. There be divers kinds of Amber; one sort of Amber is called *Succinum*, which is the juice of certain trees, the gum of Pine trees, which being hardened by the air, is yellow and bright; that is white and duskyish is bastard Amber.

Succinum
quasi dam ar-
borum succus.

A second sort of Amber is a liquid substance which flows from the Sea rock, and about the Sea shoars, and being hardned by the air, winds and water, floats up and down upon the Sea, especially about *Florida*, and other *Indian* shoares, and it is of a honyish and waxie colour.

The third kinde of Amber is metallicall, made of metals, and those more precious then gold, as *Jerome*, inferiour to it, as *Zanchinus* saith, This Amber is compounded of gold and shining silver, is very precious, and of great use. But besides this, there is yet another metallicall Amber, called *Aurichalcum*, the choicest and purest Brasse, and this is thought to bee the Chasmal or Amber here mentioned, according to that, *Rev. 1. 15. His feet were like to fine brasse, as if it had burned in a fiery furnace.* Brasse doth most neerly resemble fire. The colour of Amber here is a fiery colour, and surely this is neer the truth; but yet it cometh not up fully to the nature of the word here; for I do not finde amongst those that search into the nature of words, that this word *Chasmal* is interpreted Amber, as the learned observe, it signifies a coal that is fired most intensively; a coal that hath the utmost heat it's capable of, so hot, that presently it burneth any thing it toucheth: such coals are more red and lively then others, and it comes neerest to the nature of the word to render it, as the colour of a burning coal. Hence *Junius* and *Tremelius* render the word, *Color vividissimus*, the most lively colour; for nothing hath a more lively colour then hot coals, or fine Brasse burning in the fire: either of which, you may take, but I rather cleave to that of burning coals, which being in the midst of the fire, might so sparkle

*Primum arden-
tissimum, ex
summe ignis.*

חַמְלָה

quasi

חַמְלָה

*feruntur: et exi-
des consumunt.*

Colori ignis,

Calv.

and

and shine, as to dazle the eyes : and whether *Chasnal* in this place, were not more fitly rendred, as the colour of burning brasse, or of a burning coal, then as the colour of *Amber*, I leave to consideration.

Now what is meant by this *Amber* or coal, there is great dispute ; some understand by it *Christ*, because he is more precious then *Amber*, more lively then any burning coal whatsoever. But we must lay this sense aside, because there is a Vision of *Christ* in the latter end of the Chapter. The soundest Expositors by *Chasnal* lead us to some inferiour to *Christ*, viz. the Angels, who are called Seraphims, *Animalea ignea*, as *Kimchi* hath it; of *Seraph* to burn, and Seraphims are fiery burning creatures, *Isa.* 6. 2. About it stood the Seraphims, that is, the fiery burning Angels ; answerable to the *Chasnal* or burning coals here. So in *Judges* 13. 20. an Angel went up to heaven in a flame of fire, that element was most suitable to Seraphicall and Angelicall nature, 2 *Kings* 6. 17. There were horses and chariots of fire round about *Elisba*, and Angels were in those chariots. They are likened to fire, because of their ardent and burning zeal to doe the will of God, *Psal.* 103. 20.

For the word (*Colour*) the colour of amber, in the Hebrew it is, the eye of amber, the organ is put for the object : so you have it used, *Numb.* 11. 7. The colour of it was as the colour of *Bdelium* ; the Hebrew is, the eye of it was as the eye of *Bdelium*.

Now having given you the meaning of *Chasnal*, viz. that he saw Angels of fiery colour, like to hot burning coales, so intense and zealous that they were ready to doe and execute whatsoever God would have done ;

Note hence ;

1. That heavenly things are so transcendent, and we so weak, that we can comprehend or receive very little of them. They must be presented in things beneath their excellency, to make us capable of a little of them. God must manifest his minde here by winds, clouds, by brightnesse of a cloud, by a fire infolding, by burning coals, that so we may take up a little of the minde of God, *Job.* 3. 12. saith *Christ* to *Nicodemus*, If I have spoken to thee of earthly things, and thou dost not understand them, how wilt thou understand if I speake unto thee of heavenly things ? *Nicodemus* a Doctor in *Israel*, did not apprehend the doctrine of regeneration, when

Per corporales
ostensiones in-
corporearum
perceptum no-
nitium, Prad.

when expressed in his owne Dialect; had Christ spoken of the great things of the Kingdom of heaven in their own nature, how could he or any of us have understood? Here we see darkly and as in a glasse. God is pleased to goe in the way of man with us, to condescend to our capacities, and to present heavenly things in Hieroglyphicks, winds, clouds, fire and coals, that so we may have a little apprehension of the nature of those things.

2. That heavenly Spirits are most pure and lively. So much the word *Chasmall* leads us unto; it noteth coals that have no darknesse, no smoak in them, that are altogether fierie, and so lively as that they cannot be more lively. Such is God, he is light, and no darkness, he is more lively then all the world beside. He is *Albus purissimus*, all his actions exceed our apprehensions. Such are Angels, they are pure and lively creatures, *Heb. 1. 7.* Angels are Spirits for their puritie, and flames of fire for their activitie and zeal, *Rev. 15. 6.* the seven Angels are clothed in pure and white linnen, and their breast girded with golden girdles: pure linnen they have and golden girdles, no spot in the linnen, no drosse in the gold; to set out their puritie: and girt they are, to shew their readinesse and zeal to doe the will of God: they are as burning lively coals, that if God doe but speak the word, they run, they flie. But of this more hereafter.

*Sunt luminaria
clarissima, specu-
cula pura, quan-
tum possibile est
summa luci si-
millima, Diony-
sius.*

VERS. 5.

Also out of the midst thereof came the likenesse of four living creatures; and this was their appearance, they had the likenesse of a man.

NOW we come to that part of the Vision concerns the living creatures, from this fifth vers. to the 15. where Gods glory and government of the world are set out from superiour causes, viz. Celestiall things.

These four Creatures are commended to us:

1. From their generall nature, they are living creatures.
2. From their number, they are four.

M

3. From

3. From their forme, they had the likenesse of a man.
4. From their severall parts : as
 1. Their faces, and the number of them, *ver. 6. 8. 10.*
 2. Their wings, the number, situation, and use of them, *v. 6. 8. 9. 11.*
 3. Their feet, set out by the figure and colour of them, *ver. 7.*
 4. Their hands, set out by the figure and situation of them, *vers. 8.*
 5. From their motion, which was forthright, *ver. 9. 12.* And this is illustrated from the qualitie of it ; it was swift *ver. 14.* They ran ; it was as speedy as lightning ; and from the cause of it, which was the Spirit, *ver. 13.* whither the Spirit was to goe.
 6. From their colour, which was like burning coals and lampes, *v. 13.*

What these living creatures are, is the great dispute among Expositors : Some make them to be the four Covenants of God ; 1. That with *Adam*. 2. That with *Noah*. 3. That with *Moses*. 4. That with the Apostles. Some make them to be all the creatures. Some the four cardinall Vertues, Justice, Wisdome, Fortitude, Temperance. Some the four faculties in the soul : The Rationall, Irascible, Concupiscible, and Conscience. Some the foure chiefe Passions ; Joy, Griefe, Hope, and Feare. Some the foure Monarchies : *Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman*. Some the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, in their Stations, East, West, North, South, when in the Wildernesse. Some the four Elements, of which mans body doth consist. Some the four Evangelists, *Matthew, Marke, Luke, John*, and this being the opinion of *Jerome* and *Gregory* the great, prevail'd much, but now is deserted. Others understand by these four creatures, those be compleat and more perfect in the Church. Others expound them to be Christ, but Christ is brought in, in the latter end of the Chapter, sitting upon the throne : These creatures are some distinct ones from him, and inferiour to him. By them then we are to understand the Angels, which have a great part under God in the government of the world. The word *Chaia*, living creatures, doth not only signify a creature that is corporeall; living, and sensible, but it notes out

ture and essence, but in some qualities, they had the face, hands, thighs, and legs of a man, all which set out some choice qualities in the Angels; they had also something of the beast and bird, and if they were in nature like the living creatures, Angels were strange Monsters, and not Spirits in compound.

By their likenesse unto man is laid before us the rationalitie, knowledge, and understanding of Angels; they are not ignorant creatures, but *ipse intelligentia*, the most understanding creatures in heaven or earth. 2 Sam. 14. 20. The widow of Tekoah told David, he was wise according to the wisdom of an Angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth; that is, he was very wise, as the Angels are, to search out, understand, and discover things; Therefore *Ierome* thinks they are called Cherubims from their much knowledge, Cherubims, as it were, Rabbies, Doctors, Teachers of others; and this office some Angels have had. Dan. 8. 16. *Gabriel, Make this man to understand the vision*; and Chap. 10. 14. *I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter dayes*; They have prophetical knowledge in them, and a treasury of things that are past and done long since. Rev. 4. 6. 8. There is mention of four Beasts or living creatures, (the same with these in *Ezek.*) full of eyes before and behinde, because they see and know what is past, and what is before them; their naturall knowledge is great, being such excellent Spirits; but besides that they have much revealed to them concerning God, Christ, the Church, and things contingent. Hence is it said, 1 Pet. 1. 12. *Which things* (namely of Christ and the Gospel) *the Angels desire to look into*. The Word notes bowing down, to prie heedfully into a thing, *John* 20. 5. The Cherubims were made looking down towards the Mercy-Seat, and here the Angels look into the things of Christ, in whom are hid the treasures of Wisdom; and so they grow in this knowledge daily, as also in experimentall knowledge, arising from things done daily in the World and in the Church. Angels love to be at the Congregation, to meet the Saints, and learn of and amongst them; they understand partly by their essences, and partly by species communicated to their understandings as to ours. Angels are good Philosophers, they know the Principles, Causes, Effects, Life, Motions, Death of naturall things. Rev. 7. 1, 2, and

*A multa lize
scientia: Cheru-
rubim quasi
Cherubbim.*

*מַרְאֵה עֲרֻבִּים
עֲרֻבִּים
בְּאֵתֶּנָּה
Exod. 25.*

and 16. 5. They are great Statists, and know the affairs of Kingdoms: *Dan. 10. 13. I saith Gabriel, I remained with the Kings of Persia, he became a Courtier, and acquainted himself with the affaires of Persia.*

Four living creatures.

These were four Angels in particular; some conceive *Michael Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel*, which were chief over the rest of the whole Host of Angels. But that is not the sense, neither that God only uses four Angels in his service: for many thousands are employed, *Luke 2. 13. There was a multitude of the heavenly Hosts; and 2 Kings 6. 17. there was an army with the Prophet*; but it relates to the object, *viz.* The world, which is distinguished into four parts, East, West, North, and South, the work of these Angels laid in all those parts, and none of them exempt from the presence, observation and operation of the Angels.

Obj. 1. That God employes not ignorant silly ones in his service, but those are intelligent, Angels that are wise and very knowing; such should the Angels of the Churches be; *The Priests lips should keep knowledge, Mal. 2. 7.* And as God is termed, *1 Sam. 2. 3. a God of knowledge*; so should he be a man of knowledges: the Pharisees were blind guides, and what a multitude of blind Priests were there till within these few yeers in the Christian world? and too many there are to this day that have their right eye darkned, *Zach. 11. ult.* But the man of God should have new and old in his treasure, and be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work,

2. That the Angels are in all quarters of the world, taking notice of mens words, works and waies they go, I had almost said of their very thoughts, and that they do, if discovered by some sign; Angels can be present at all times, know what devils or other men can know of us; any voice, any act they are privie to; yea, by outward expressions they may gather what is within, they being spirits, can insinuate far into our hearts and natures, though not immediately know our thoughts. Therefore we should carry our selves soberly, righteously, and holily, in this world in regard of them: *1 Cor. 11. 10. the woman is to have power on her head*

אל דעות
איש דעות

*si signo exterior-
no prodantur,
Lest.*

head because of the Angels, shee is to be covered, and to carry her self modestly, reverently, because of the Angels. *Psal. 138. 1.* Before the gods will I sing to thee: the Vulgar hath, *in conspectu Angelorum, before the Angels*, their presence should awe men and women, and keep them from all dishonesty; evill words, acts, gestures, secret grudging, all discontents and distempers; for as they are rejoyced to discern a good frame of spirit in you, to see you keep that order God hath set in the Church and State, to walk as Christians to the honour of God; so they are grieved to see the contrary, and you must answer for your sins against these great officers in the great family of heaven and earth: a thing that is little thought on, but if it be a sin to despise and grieve a believer, a brother that is inferiour to an Angell, is it not much more sin to dishonour their presence, and grieve their persons? Smoak drives away Bees, and an ill favour Doves, so doe ill passages drive away the Spirit and Angels of God. *Eccl. 5. 6.* The Angel that is of Gods Council, a witnesse of our wayes, will not take it well, the Angell may smite thee for neglect of duties, ill performances of them.

Grata est Angelis pia significatio, Aug.

Magna cura vigilanti studio adsunt nobis omnibus horis & locis succurrentes & providentes omnibus necessitatibus nostris, gemitus nostros, & suspiria referentes ad Deum.

Ambulant nobiscum, in omnibus viis nostris, considerantes quam pie quam honeste in medio prave uitae nostrae conversemur, adiuvant laborantes, protegunt quiescentes, hortantur pugnautes, coronant vincentes: grandis eis cura de nobis, Aug. Soliloq. c. 27.

3. That men should be ashamed to be ignorant, seeing Angels are likened unto them for knowledge and understanding. Many men, yea, such as are called Christians are brutish in their knowledge, their souls serve only for salt to keep their bodies from putrefaction, *Eph. 2. 12.* without God in the world; that is, without the fear, authority and soveraignty of God falling upon their hearts, and without the knowledge of God in their heads; and God may say of many Christians, My people is foolish, they have not known me, they are foolish children, they have none understanding, they are wise to do evill, but to do good they have no knowledge; *Jer. 4. 22.* The Apostle bids us in understanding to be men; shall we be babes only, let us now be Angels in understanding; David was wise as an Angel, and the Saints shall judge the Angels, *1 Cor. 6.* The evill Angels, they are very subtil, they have their depths, methods, wiles, and how shall we do it, if we be ignorant; they come to the Assemblies to get advantage

to accuse us, let us get knowledge to condemn them.

4. That God doth interest Angels and use their service in the government of the world; not only men, Magistrates and Ministers, but Angels also. The *Jewes* made *Jerusalem* the prison of God and Angels, they thought that neither God nor his Angels did appear, or rule any where else. To take off this conceit, God appears to *Ezekiel* in *Babylon* after this manner, to convince him, that he and his Angels do govern there, and in all quarters of the world, as well as at *Sion*; that God rules in the world is granted, but that Angels should help to sway the Scepter is not so credible.

A little therefore to clear it, 2 Cor. 1. 4. *In whom the God of this world hath blinded their minds*; some understand it of the true God that created the world, but the best Interpreters give us in

Satan here, and make him the god of the world, and that by example, command and suggestion, and Christ doth thrice call Satan the prince of the world, Job. 1. 2. 3. 1. 14. 30. 16. 11. and Eph. 2. 2. according to the Prince of the power of the aire, the spirit that now worketh.

The Devil hath great power in the aire to raise winds, to cause storms, thunder, lightning, which is the power of the aire, and the same power hath he in the spirits of the children of disobedience, and by that spirit whereof he is Lord, he can move them any way, as the winds and clouds, and carry them against Christ and his truths. Now hence I infer, that if Satan and all Angels be as gods, princes in this world, have power in the air and hearts of wicked men, then must it needs follow, that good Angels are as gods, and Princes, and have as much power in the world and hearts of good men as they, otherwise devils should gain by their fall more then ever they had by their standing, and its not credible that wicked damned spirits should have more honourable titles and larger power then the holy and glorious Angels.

What be those services then good Angels are employed in?

Ans. 1. To inform us of Gods will, and God of our waies.

They acquaint us with Gods mind, Angels told *Abraham* and *Lot* what God would doe to *Sodom*: an Angell tells *Elijah*, what to say to the Messengers of the King of *Samaria*: an Angel tells the Apostles, that Christ shall return in that manner they had seen him go up to heaven. Christ tells *John*, Rev. 22. 16. that he had sent his Angels to testify those things in the Churches: the

Carcer Dei & Angelorum.

Exemplo imperio & suggestione.

Unaqueque res visibilis habet Angelicam potestatem sibi proportionem, Aug. in l. 83. qu. 79. 9. In hoc mundo visibili nihil nisi per creaturam invisibilem disponi potest.

Thom. 1. part qu. 110.

Gen. 18. 19.

2 Kings 1. 3.

Acts 1. 11.

Angel

*Per Ministros
more potentissimi
regis omnia fa-
cit, Bonav.*

Angel tels *Daniel* that he came forth to give him skill and understanding, *Chap. 9. 22. Mat. 1. 20. 2. 13.* An Angel informs *Josepb* of the minde of God, touching *Mary* and *Christ*. So to inform God what is done here among men, the Angels went up the ladder as well as came down, *Zach. 1. 11.* The Angel sent out by the Lord, certified the Angel *Christ*, that stood among the Myrtle trees, that they had travelled up and down the world, and behold, say they, *all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest*; This God doth for honour and not necessity, he knoweth all things, but he will have them witness of his will.

2. In opposing the great enemies of *Christ* and his Church, whereupon they intermedle with Kings and Kingdomes, and the great affaires thereof. *Dan. 10. 20. Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? now will I return to fight with the King of Persia, and when I am gone forth, lo, the Prince of Grecia shall come.* This Angel *Gabriel* oppos'd the cruell Edicts of *Cambyfes* King of *Persia*, who laboured to keep the *Jewes* in captivity longer, and to oppresse them sooner then others had done; but *Gabriel* kept them from execution, and brought his kingdom to ruine by degrees; and therefore he saith the Prince of *Grecia* shall come, I will leave *Persia*, and go into *Greece*, and stir up *Alexander* to come into *Persia* and spoile the King of his kingdom: when Princes are stirred up by flatterers and prophane wretches to oppresse the godly, to hinder the work of the Temple, then Angels do fight against them. *Elesbaan* King of the *Ethiopians* being in armes against *Dunaan* a Tyrant, his army was much oppressed with famine and the power of the Tyrant, whereupon he cryed to God for help, and presently heard, *Gabriel, Gabriel, Gabriel*, thrice he heard that voice from heaven, intimating, that *Gabriel* would help him; whereupon he joyned battell with the Tyrant, overcame, kill'd most, and took the Tyrant King of the *Homerites*, and bound him in chains. At a great battell between *Clotharius* and *Theodoricus* was seen an Angel with a drawn sword, and many were slain on both sides. Some understand these Princes to be Spirits, if good, there is no discord between them; good Angels are without sin, and so no opposition in their wills to Gods, or one another; if of evill Angels, it's that wee aim at, the good Angels oppose and contend against the evill with all their strength, *Rev. 12. 7. Michael* and his

Baron. anno.

523.

*Ammonius de
gestis, Franco-
rum, l. 3. c. 87,
88. Ubi non est
contrarietas vo-
luntatis, non est
pugna.*

his Angels fought against the Dragon and his. There was a great battell in heaven, the Devill and his angels were cast out, which is for the great comfort of *Sion*; certainly devils and devillish men would over-run al, if there were not Angels imployed in the four quarters of the world, to keep the Church and people of God: when *Balaam* and *Balak* would have curst Gods people, an Angel cometh forth and fights against them, *Numb.* 22. 22. This is one great office of the Angels, to fight against Princes, Potentates, and men of the earth, that seek to oppresse the people of God, and labour to hinder Temple-worke, and the welfare of *Sion*.

3. To execute the judgements of God upon wicked men: the death of their first-born in *Egypt* (which was the chiefeft of the plagues, and touched them nearest) was done by a destroying Angel; who therefore is called *Hannaschbit*, *Exod.* 12. 23. the destroyer shall not come into their houses, but into the *Egyptians* he did come; the singular number is put for the plurall, a thing usuall in Scripture, and so the sense is, that Angels were the destroyers of the *Egyptians*: and the *Psalmist* in the 78. *Psal.* 49. saith, God did this work by sending evil Angels among them; not that these Angels were wicked spirits, as some have thought, but Angels or messengers of evill, of death unto them. The *Egyptian* Sorcerers used the help of wicked Angels to oppose *Moses* and harden the *Egyptians*, and God used the help of good Angels to punish evill doers; they have been, and are imployed in such service; the Angels that came to *Lots* house, smote the *Sodomites* with blindness, great and small, which were at *Lots* door, *Gen.* 19. 11. They fetched fire from heaven, and destroyed the place, *ver.* 13. When seventy thousand died of the plague, *2 Sam.* 24. 17. in *David*s daies, it is made the worke of an Angel, *ver.* 17. he saw the Angel that smote the people; it was an Angel that slew 185000. *Assyrians.* *Isa.* 37. 36. *Psal.* 35. 5. 6. It's their worke to chase and persecute wicked men; often Angels of God doe suddenly destroy them. *Act.* 12. 23. And immediately the Angel of the Lord smote him; *Lorinus* thinks it was the Devill did it, but it was some good Angel, that being zealous for God, he did vindicate his glory, which was given to a mortall sinfull man: Angels cannot indure this dishonour; *Iosephus* in his 19. Book, and 8. Chap. sets out this story fully, how he came in, in cloath of silver, was saluted as a God, saw an Owle over his

Ego ille vestra
appellatione
Deus vitam re-
linquere jubet
fatali necessita-
te coarguente
vestrum menda-
cium; & quem
immortalem sa-
lutaris ad mor-
tem raptor.

head, felt a pain in his bowels, and said, I whom ye all call a God, am commanded to leave my Godship, and by death to confute your lie of my immortality. Neither belongeth it to Angels onely to punish the wicked, but to exercise chastisement upon the godly; an Angel meets *Moses* in the Inn, and would have slaine him, *Exod.* 4. 24. So the *Greeke* and the *Chaldee* read it; and that because he neglected the circumcision of *Moses*; an Angel smote *Zachary* with dumbnesse, because of his unbelieve, *Luke* 1. So an Angel corrected *David* for his sin of mumbring his people.

4. To defend the godly, to save and deliver them from harms: this is a constant office; they keep the Saints from evill men, spirits and things, *Rev.* 7. 1, 2, 3. *Four Angels stood on the four corners of the earth, and held the four winds of the earth, that they should not blow on the Sea, or any Tree: and another Angel cries to the four, hurt not the earth, sea, trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads Psal.* 34. 7. The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them; Angels are like Armies round about the Generall, and keep from danger; when *Jacob* was to meet with his brother *Esau*, (who came with a band of four hundred men against him) the Angels of God met him, (they are forward to this service) *Gen.* 32. 1, 2. And when he saw them, what, said he, This is Gods host, what need I feare my brothers host? and he called the place *Mabanaim*, or *Macbanaim*: Its in the duall number, and notes two Hosts, two Camps: if my brother have one band, I have two, if he have men, I have Angels; if four hundred men, I have twice four hundred Angels. When *Elisha* was in *Dothan*, the King of *Syria* sent a great Host with horses and Chariots, and they came by night, compass the City about, and now *Elisha* is a lost man, and *Gebezi* cries out, Alas Master, what shall we doe? Fear not, saith he, they that be with us, are more then they that be with them; and when the young mans eyes were opened, he saw the mountaines full of Horses and Chariots of fire, and that round about *Elisha*; was there an Army against *Elisha*? here is an Army for him: were they many? here are more: were there Chariots and Horses? here be Chariots and Horses of fire. When *Daniel* was in the den of Lions, he had no fire to feare them, no weapon or strength to kill them, but an Angell is sent to shut their mouths; so that here is a wonder, a

2 King. 6. 14.
15, 16, 17.

Lamb

Lamb amongst Lions, and not rent in peeces; where Angels are the Lambs keepers, there the Lions are toothlesse and mouthlesse; the Angels have a speciall charge of the godly, *Psal 91.11. He shall give his Angels charge over thee*, the Angels stand charged with the custody of the godly, and when a guard is set about a person of quality, who dares come near to hurt such a one? It's said in the 7. verse, *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee*; Its nigh, when at a mans side, at his right hand; but *it shall not come nigh to hurt thee*: and what's the reason? for, *he shall give his Angels charge, &c.* They looke well to their charge, they never slumber nor sleepe, *Rev. 21. 12.* Gods care of his Church now, is greater then it was under the Law; for the watch is double to what it was then, there are twelve Angels at the gates of *Jerusalem*; whereas in *Ezekiel 9.2.* there were but six. The Church being now enlarged, the enemies are enraged, and the guarding Angels increased; no sooner were the Apostles imprisoned, but an Angel brings them forth, *Act. 5.8.9.* and what great things the Angel did for *Peter*, *Act. 12.* is knowne to all; his deliverance was so great, *Ver. 15.* that they could not beleieve he was come forth and knockt at the door, but that it was his Angel; whence the opinion of *Tutelar Angels* hath received great strength: some affirm from hence, that every man hath his particular Angel to keep him, *Dan. 6. 22.* which seems rather a *Platonick* conceit, then a Scripture truth, for *Isidorus Clariss* turns this place, his Messenger, and so the word is used in Scripture, *Judg. 2.1.* *The Angel of the Lord came up,* or Messenger, as it's in the Margent; and *Mal. 3.1.* *I will send my Messenger,* the Hebrew is, *my Angel*: and surely this party that knockt at the door was *Peters Messenger*, not his Angel; and if this be well rendred *Angel*, why is not that so rendred, *Luke 7.24.* *The Angels of John* being departed; it's the Messenger, and so it were better here, his Messenger, then his Angel: for shall we suppose the faithfull so ignorant, as to thinke an Angel could not come in without knocking, and having doors opened? Besides, the apparition of an Angel would have affrighted them greatly. Not to stick at this, although we find no warrant in the Word for assignment of a particular Angel to every man, yet we acknowledge many Angels appointed to that worke. *Matth. 18.10.* *Their*

ἀγγελὸν τῶν
τῶν ἀγγέλων
ἰσχυρῶν

Angels (not their Angel) behold the face of my Father.

5. To guide and lead the godly in good and safe wayes. *Gen. 24. 7.* He shall send his Angels before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence; So *ver. 40.* he will send his Angel with thee and prosper thy way: the businesse of marriage is so weighty and honorable, that Angels presence and assistance is in it; Angels are present and president over that worke, *Psal. 91. 11, 12.* They are charged to keep thee in all thy wayes, to bear thee up in their arms, that is, their strength shall be employed to uphold and lead thee in a good way: God begets children to himselfe by the Word and Spirit, and puts them forth to Angels to nurse, to guide, and lead; it's a metaphor taken from Nurses, that bear their children upon their arms, and lift them over thresholds, *Exod. 32. 24.* Behold, saith God to Moses, my Angel shall goe before thee, he was to goe to Canaan, and an Angel was to lead him that way, Angels are well acquainted with the wayes to heaven, if you will goe that way, you are sure to meet with Angels.

*Angeli reges;
Domini coram
sunt quos regunt*

6. To comfort; next Christ and the Spirit, Angels are the best comforters, because they stand neereſt God alwayes, before his face, and they are sent to comfort Gods servants, when in straits, under pressures. Mary was a poor Maid, of mean condition, and to her comes an Angel, *Luke 1. 30.* Feare not Mary, thou hast found favour with God; So *Cornelius*, Thy prayers and almes are come up, a memoriall before God, *Chap. 27. 24.* When the Ship was tossed, waves, winds, and darknesse conspired their ruine, then saith Paul, an Angel stood by me, and said, Fear not Paul, God hath given thee thy life, and the lives of all with thee, wherefore be of good cheer, he had drunke a cup of Angelicall consolation, and knew well to comfort them with the same consolation. When Daniel fasted and prayed, and was much afflicted for his people, *Dan. 6. Chap. 10. 11, 12.* O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speake unto thee, for unto thee am I now sent, fear not Daniel. Mary rises early, and meets with Angels that comforted her, *Job. 20. Luke 22. 43.* An Angel appeared to Christ and strengthened him, the servant comforted the Master.

Act. 10: 4

7. To look unto the souls of men, that they fall not into the hands of Devils at their death; for if the Devill durſt contend with Michael for the body of Moses, much more for the souls of men.

men. *Luke 16.22.* *Lazarus* soule was carried by the Angels into *Abrahams* bosome, men carry the carkasse to the ground, but Angels carry the soule to glory, they guard it through the clouds into the presence of the blessed God: before he had none but Dogs to pity him, now he hath Angels to attend him. The Devill is mighty busie while we live, he goes about like a roaring Lion, but at death then he is most busie, and presumes there is a tree cut down for his fire.

8. They are Gods reapers at the end of the world, *Mat. 24.31.* *He shall send his Angels, and they shall gather together his elect from the foure winds, from one end of the world to another; they must blow that terrible trumpet, awaken the dead, and cite them to judgement; they must gather the ashes, bones, limbs, bodies of Saints together. Matth. 13.41,42. The Son of man shall send his Angels, and they shall, &c.* *Basil* in his *Hom.* of 40 Martyrs, tells of one that seeing them thrust in a Winters night into a cold lake, he saw Angels descend, and putting Crowas upon all their heads, but one.

9. To declare Kingdomes, Cities, People cursed, *Judg. 5.23.* *Curse ye Meroz* bitterly said the Angel of the Lord, because they came not out to help, &c. Some thinke this Angel was *Michael*, who was Generall in this war, but that is the opinion of men, not the warrant of Scripture.

A Lapid. in locum.

10. The Angels have work and power in the Church of God, *Rev. 15.6.* *Seven Angels came out of the Temple,* and *Chap. 14.15,17.* *Another Angel came out of the Temple,* Angels being in the Temple is often spoken of, and notes some power, that they have in the Assemblies under the Gospel. *Zach. 3.* The stone with seven eyes, some make to be Christ with his Angels that are employed for the government of the Church throughout the world; and surely *Michael* and his Angels do contend daily in the Assemblies against the Dragon and his: In the Assemblies, Devils are present and active, Satan stood at *Joshuabs* right hand to resist him, to hinder all the Temple work; when we are near God, devills are near us, intending mischief, but Angels are at hand, and hinder their designs; they observe us, and our carriages in the Congregation, *Eccles. 5.6.* Make not vows, and then slight them, there is an Angel present; and it will not be enough to say it was an error, God will

Ribera.

will be angry, and an Angel may smite thee for it; this is spoken of us, when we are in the House of God, there the Angels keep speciall watch.

*Lib. 6. de bello
Iudaico, Relin-
quamus has
sedes.*

L 7. c. 12.

Nigremus hinc.

Audita major

humana vox ex-

cedere Deos.

Tacit.

Josephus saith, that the voyce of an Angel was heard out of the Temple, saying; Let us leave these seats; they had a place in the Church as well as others: and again, he saith, the Angels were the keepers of the *Jewish* people, and that a little before the *Roman* coming, was heard a voyce out of the Temple, Let us go hence: and a *Heathen* Writer saith, that a voyce greater then mans was heard, That the gods were departing.

VERS. 6.

And every one had foure faces, &c.

NOW we come to their severall parts; and first of their faces, which are mentioned here in the 8. and 10. verses, every one had foure faces, and the likenesse of their faces were:

1. The face of a Man.
2. Of a Lion.
3. Of an Oxe.
4. Of an Eagle.

In some Pictures you may see severall faces, so drawn they are, that which way soever you look, a severall face is presented: so here, before was the face of a man, behinde of an Eagle, on the right side of a Lion, and on the left side of an Oxe: here is not a face but is compared to the face of some principall creature, man is the chiefe of all the rest; a Lion is the King of wilde Beasts; the Oxe is the chiefe of tame ones, and the Eagle of Birds.

The face of a man types out unto us the understandings of Angels, and that their administrations are with knowledge and equity; of this hath already been spoken.

This face is put, first, to shew the excellency of reason, which must have the introduction into, and managing of all actions, else they are neither humane nor Angelicall.

By this face also is noted their humanity and love to mankind; Angels are of a loving nature, and most carefull of men; therefore

therefore it is said, *Heb. 1. last, They are ministering Spirits sent out, &c.*

The face of a Lion types out the strength of Angels; A Lion is a creature of great strength, *Prov. 30. 30. The strongest amongst beasts and turneth not away for any; he never flies or feares, Isa. 31. 4. If a multitude of Shepherds be called forth, he will not be afraid of them, nor a base himselfe at their noise; and Judg. 14. 18. What is stronger then a Lion, said the Interpreter of Sampsons riddle? and we may say among all creatures, what is stronger then an Angel; The Scripture calls the Devill the strong one, Mat. 12. 29. and so it calls the Angel, Rev. 10. 1. I saw a mighty Angel; and they are very mighty, an Angel can hinder the blowing of the wind, Rev. 7. 1. stop the mouths of Lions, Dan. 6. 22. break iron chaines, open prison doors, and iron gates, Acts 12. an Angel can smite with blindness, Gen. 19. 11. 2 King. 6. 18. Both Sodomites and Syrians were so smitten; Angels worke upon the fancy, Matth. 2. 13. 19. 20. suggest many things of great and good use to the minde; for if Devills can take the word out of our mindes, sow tares in the field, Luke 8. 12. Matth. 13. 24, 25. put devillish thoughts into the heart, Job. 13. 2. worke powerfully in the heart of the disobedient, Eph. 2. 1. and trouble their spirits, 1 Sam. 16. 15. I see not but good Angels may doe as much, being more potent then they. Rev. 12. Michael and his Angels overcame the Dragon, and his; and Psal. 103. 20. they excell in strength, they are called *exercitus caelestis*, Luke 2. 13. one can doe more then a great Army; one slew 185000. in a night, 2 King. 19. 35. They are *Bellatores fortissimi*, and have appeared like Warriors; David saw an Angel with a sword in his hand stretched over Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 21. 16. Elisba saw them with Horses and Chariots of fire, 2 King. 6. 17. Angels are Gods Militia, Psal. 68. 17. the Chariots of God are 20000. even thousands of Angels, they stand alwayes before God, and can do what ever God wills and commande.*

This consideration of the strength of Angels, should adde to our comforts and Gods praises; if a man be in danger, and have a strong convoy appointed by the King, he is secure, much comforted, and thankfull too, that Majesty hath appointed it: God hath given us the mighty Angels that are stronger then Lions to be our guard to convoy us through the wilderness of this world; let it multiply our comforts, and Gods praises.

The

The next face is that of an Ox ; and it notes out the obsequiousnesse, faithfulness, patience, and usefulness of Angels in their ministrations; for an Ox accustomed to the yoke is very tractable, not stubborn; kicking and flinging, as untamed Heifers are, *Hos. 10. 11.* Ephraim is as a Heifer that is taught, and loves to tread out the corne : a Heifer taught, and delighting in her work, is willing to it : such are Angels, *Psal. 103. 20.* They hearken to the voyce of his Word, they looke upon God as the great Generall, and if he give out the word, they give out their strength, and goe about the worke willingly, they are very obsequious to his commands ; if he sayes, Go smite *Herod* for his pride, *Balaam* for his covetousnesse, *David* for his vain-glory, *Senacherib* for his blasphemy, and *Sodom* for its uncleannesse, presently they go.

*Fratrum solum
ministerium.*

2. Faithfulness; an Ox doth faithfull service, Horses do oft deceive in their service, but an Ox seldome in plowing or carrying of burthens : So Angels are faithfull in their ministrations, they fail not in the least particular ; the Angel would not let *Jehovah* worship him; the Angels would not suffer *Lot* to linger in *Sodom*.

3. Patience; an Ox is a patient creature, what burthen soever is laid upon him, or what work soever he is imployed in, the Ox is not impatient; So the Angels they are patient in their ministration, though they meet with much opposition. The Prince of *Persia* withstood *Gabriel* 21. daies, *Dan. 10. 13.* In the midst of oppositions and great services, they are without all impatience, though their work never end, *Rev. 4. 8.* yet they never complain.

4. Usefulness; *Prov. 14. 4.* much increase is by the strength of the Ox, no creature more usefull to the support of a family than the Ox; for of old, all the plowing was by Oxen. *Elijah* finds *Elisha* plowing with twelve yoke of Oxen, *1 King. 19. 19.* And *Job* had five hundred yoke of Oxen, and it's said, they were plowing, *Job 12. 14.* no mention of Horses: and in some places of this Kingdom they make greatest use of Oxen: by their strength, Kingdoms and Families are maintained. Therefore *Moses*, *Deut. 3. 17.* compares *Jehovah* to the Bullock or Ox, because he sustained his fathers family and *Egypt* with corn, *Exod. 22. 1.* If an Ox or Sheep were stolen and so killed, or sold, the thiefe was to restore five for the Ox, four for the Sheep, and the reason was, because of the service and usefulness of those creatures; they served for sacrifice to God.

plu

plow the earth, to feed and cloath the family, in other things they were to reſtore onely double. *David* makes it one part of the happineſſe of a Commonwealth, that the Oxen be ſtrong to labour, *Pſal.* 144. 14. Oxen are needfull and uſefull creatures; and Angels herein reſemble Oxen, they are miniſtring ſpirits, ſent out for the ſervice of Gods family, they live not to themſelves, but to the publick: In the *Revelations* you may read what great ſervices the Angels are employed in; they ſound the trumpets, and powre out the vials of Gods wrath, they preſerve the Saints from the violence of Devils and devilish men.

This inſtructs man to be like Angels in theſe qualities; if God command, call for any duty, to be obſequious, yeelding, and to ſay with *Samuel*, *Here I am, Speake Lord, thy ſervant is willing to beare, ready to obey*; and when we are in the ſervice, let us be faithfull, do it conſcionably, let us be patient, although we meet with delaies, oppoſitions, reproaches, and loſſe; let us be ſerviceable and profitable to others; Angels have no benefit by their miniſtrations, God hath the glory, and man the good.

The laſt face is of an Eagle, and in it, as in a glaſſe, we may ſee the perſpicaciouſneſſe, ſwiftneſſe, and vivacity of the Angels; for theſe three are in Eagles observable:

1. They are quick-sighted, *Job.* 39. 29. *Her eyes behold afar off*, ſpeaking of the Eagle, from the top of the rocks, out of the clouds they are ſaid to behold fiſhes ſwimming in the Seas, ſo ſtrong is their ſight, that they ſoar aloft, and can along time behold the Sun with open and ſtedfaſt eyes: *Scaliger* hath ſeen it in a tam'd Eagle. A man of acute parts that can ſee quick and far into matters, we ſay he is Eagle-eyed: the Angels are not wanting in this particular, they are quick-sighted, 2 *Sam.* 14. 20. and *Rev.* 4. 6. The ſoure beaſts there mentioned, being the ſame here in *Ezekiel* are ſaid to be full of eyes before and behinde, and in the 8. verſe full of eyes within; they have much naturall knowledge, much revealed knowledge ſet out by their eyes within, and much experimentall knowledge coming in by their obſervation and deep inſight into things, noted by their eyes before and behind; they ſoar aloft, ſtand before God, behold the face of God alwayes, *Matth.* 18. 10.

2. Eagles are ſwift in their flight, 2 *Sam.* 1. 23. *Swifter then Eagles,*
and

*In aquila Cicn.
rara Merlin in
Jobum 6. 39.*

Lam. 4. 19.

and *Jobn 9. 26. The Eagle maketh haste to the prey.* Pindar calls the Eagle the queen of Birds, for her swiftnes, no Foul flies more swiftly then the Eagle: hence, when things were to be done suddenly the Scripture mentioneth the Eagle, *Hos. 8. 1. He shall come as an Eagle against the House of the Lord,* that is, *Nebuchadnezzar* shall come suddenly. Angells are no dull creatures, in a night the destroying Angel slew all the first-borne in Egypt, in a night 1850000. in the camp of *Senacherib*; and *Dan. 9. 21. Gabriel* came flying swiftly to *Daniel*, and suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, *Luke 2. 13.*

Nec annis debilitatur, nec morbis obnoxia est.

Crebra mutatione penuriam, Hieron. Imberbes ut juvenes.

3 Eagles are fresh and lively alwayes, age and sicknesse work not upon them as upon other Birds, the Eagle in her age is youthfull: how then doth she dye? *Pliny* tells us, that its neither age or sicknesse that kills the Eagle but hunger, the upper bill groweth so over the under, that she cannot open her mouth to take in sustenance, and so dyes, *Psal. 103. 5.* Their youth is renewed like the Eagles; the Eagle is renewed by the oft change of her feathers. The Cherubims before the mercy-Seat (which represented the Angels) were without beards, to shew their vigour, vivacity and eternity. Angels never grow old, they are alwayes lusty and lively their service doth not wear them out; its mans sin that withereth and consumes him more than his worke. *Adam* should never have look'd old, never have decayed, but retain'd an immortal vivacity, if he had not sinned; they are lively in their service, not dull.

Observ. I. That Angels are fit for publike and great service, they have four faces, a Mans, a Lions, an Oxes, an Eagles, which tells us they have all is requisite to great undertakings, they have wisdom to consult, to contrive & manage the affairs of the world prudentially; they have the strength of a Lion to execute, they have the willingnesse and faithfullnes of the Ox to rejoyce the heart of the commander; patience to undergo the difficulties of the work, and usefulness for the publick; they are quick-sighted to discern and prevent the designs of enemies, & speedily to dispatch much in a little time, and that with chearfulness; this is meant by their four faces, which notes their perfection and fitnesse for service in all parts of the world; in regard of which, and the prophet to whom this vision was made, they are said to have one face before, another behind, and on each side one; and that God doth use their service

service in all creatures rationall and irrationall ; they have the shapes of men, birds and beasts.

2. That suitable persons ought to be employed in publick and great services ; God employes Angels in the government of the world, who are wise, trusty, strong, and speedy : and you know what men God calls for, in the State and Church, *Exod. 18. 21.* Provide thou out of the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousnesse, and place such over them to be Rulers of thousands, hundreds, fifties, tens ; he must search amongst all the people for such, far and near, and if in one Tribe he cannot find them, he must in another. The time hath been, that seniority, money, favour, friendship hath carryed the great places in this City, but you have smarted for it, instead of good Angels you have had ill spirits, now I hope you will not look who hath most money in his hutch, best friends to back him, but most wisdom in his head, and zeal in his heart, and God on his side ; now I trust you will learn of God, and employ such as have the faces of men, Lions, Oxen and Eagles, men full of wisdom, courage, trust, serviceableness to the publick, and of great dispatch, such should be in the City, in the Army. So for the Church, you know what men God points you to, *1 Tim. 3.* and *1 Pet. 5.* Gods Bishops must not Lord it over Gods heritage, and exercise dominion over it, Gods Officers must not be Prelaticall ; its the fleece, and not the flocke that such men look after, unlesse it be to scatter, to wound their conscience and suck their blood ; some of that Sect, instead of preaching to save souls, have onely plotted to ruine Kingdomes.

3. That Angels being noble and glorious creatures, disdain not to do service to them that are far beneath themselves. Man at first, when in his glory, was under the Angels, but now since he sinn'd, he is fallen lower, as low as hell ; man is now a miserable, mortall creature, he hath a vile body, a defiled conscience, and a polluted soul, yet Angels that are stiled Gods, *Psal. 8. 5.* so is the originall, that are Cherubims of glory, *Heb. 9. 5.* that are holy, *Mat. 25. 31.* Elect, *1 Tim. 5. 21.* that are of the privy Councell of Heaven, and the life-guard of God himself, *Matth. 18. 10.* even these blessed creatures are not ashamed to serve us, though we have the sent of the earth and hel about us, though we do oft grieve and offend them with our sinful carriages, and the great God their Lord and

Master, yet they despise us not, but cheerfully minister unto us. Would any great Prince attend a mean man full of sores and vermine? if so, it argues wonderfull humility; it's more that Angels do, in waiting upon us: it's monstrous pride then in men that have parts, place, honour, greatnesse, grace, what ever it be, not to stoop to those that are inferiour: thou hast not more worth in thee any way then an Angel hath: and Angels condescend to serve us, therefore let not us minde high things, but condescend to men of low estate, and not be wise in our own conceit, *Rom. 12. 16.*

4. That God affects speed in his service: Angels are swift as Eagles, and dispatch great things in a little time, they know a dillazie motion is not the motion heaven approves, *Zach. 2. 4.* saith one Angel to another, Run, speak to the young man; going is not sufficient, where running can be had: *Festina lente*, is not a Motto for heaven gates: In the worst work that ever was in the world, Christ calls for speed, *What thou dost doe quickly*, *Joh. 13. 27.* when Judas was about his treason. Speed and life in busineses is commendable, acceptable, *Matth. 5. 25.* Agree with thine adversary quickly, *Darius* would have his decree done speedily, *Ezra 6. 12.* and God would have his Decrees and Will fulfilled, done with speed: It's Gods will now, that you should help him against the mighty. When the Temple was to be built, the people came so fast, brought in so much, that they were bid to stay, and that work of theirs was pleasing to God and man. We have a *Babel* to pull down as well as a Temple to build, can you be employed better? *Luk. 16.* you are Stewards, & may quickly be call'd to account, *Be speedy in what you do*

In the 11. verse you have one thing more touching their faces, and that is, *their faces were stretched upwards*, thus were their faces; its in your books, as if it had reference onely to the former verse, and not to that follows in the eleventh: but *Montanus* and others that render the Hebrew exactly, read it thus: *But their faces and their wings were stretched upwards*; its true, they have the faces of men and beasts, but they are stretched upward, they looked up to him that sate upon the Throne, which was Christ the Cherubims faces, *Exod. 25. 20, 21.* were towards the Mercy-seat, and that was above upon the Ark; so that there and here, the Cherubims, these Angels look upward.

Objection. That all creatures depend upon Christ, these Angels have

have the faces of Men, Lions, Oxen, Eagles, and look up to him; if there were nothing in it but this, that Angels in their own nature look up, it might convince us, that all inferiour creatures do depend upon him, as well as those noble ones; but when they come in with the faces of other creatures looking up, its cleare evidence, that all depend upon Christ, Col. 1. 16, 17. *By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible, and invisible, whether Thrones or Dominions, Principalities or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and by him all things doe consist: he holds all in his hand, heaven and earth, men and Angels, they all consist and subsist in him, Heb. 1. 3. He upholds all things by the word of his power.*

2. That in all our ministrations, we are to have our instructions and directions from Christ: Angels look up to him, if he speak, they hear, they move and act, if not, they stir not. Moses and Aaron did nothing in the State or Church, without direction from God: Princes must look into the Law of God continually, Deut. 17. that they may doe things warrantably: the Centurions souldiers and servants did come, go, and do at his appointment, not their own; and Angels run not of their own heads, they will hear a word of command, have a commission from Christ, before they go. Its not enough that we be knowing, full of courage, quick to dispatch much, a Commission, a Warrant from God we must have, else all our doing is nothing; nay, let us do the will of God without knowing, we are warranted by God to do it; its rather sin then service, Pro. 3. 5, 6. *Lean not to thine owne understanding, let it be never so great, acute, cleere, its not beyond Angels, they look up to God, and so must thou, In all thy wayes acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy path.* Christ is the great Counsellour, and we must not in one or two, or some great exigence of businesse consult with him, but in all our wayes, what ever we attempt for our selves, families, State, Church, we must consult with him that sits upon the Throne, and he will direct our paths; Most miscarry in their wayes, or make little progresse, because they consult not at all, or very little with Christ; whereas if men did consult with Christ, and do all upon his warrant, upon a divine ground, they should never miscarry in their wayes, but proceed farther in the paths of godlines in a few weeks, then they did before in many yeers:

yeers : when *David* had consulted with God, he could say, God was at his right hand, so that he should not be moved, *Psa.* 16.

3. That the pleasure of *Christ* is worthy our waiting for; Angels look up and attend what he will say, and make known unto them; these holy, glorious and mighty creatures think not much to wait upon *Christ*, and exercise their patience till he please to reveal his minde. *Christ* is a great King, the onely Counsellour, and his counsell of infinite worth, and its not State, but equity, that all creatures wait upon him, Angels do it, and shall we grudge at it? *Psal.* 123. 1, 2. *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants looke to the band of their Master, and as the eyes of a maiden to the bands of her Mistresse, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God : He interprets the meaning of looking up, which is waiting upon God, for manifestation of himselfe, Psal.* 5. 3. *David* would direct his Prayer to God, and look up, not downe to the world, downe to corruption, but up to God, what he would speake, *Psal.* 85. 8. *I will heare what God the Lord will speake, Mic.* 7. 7. Let the resolution of the Prophet be thine, *I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will beare me.*

4. That *Christ* is an object of admiration and adoration. The looking upwards is *Signum admirationis & typus reverentiae*; the Cherubims looked towards the Mercy-sear, admiring and adoring him was figured by it; and we lift up our faces towards heaven, when we admire and adore God : you have the phrase in *Job* 22. 26. *Thou shalt have thy delight in the Almighty, and lift up thy face unto God : That is, admire and adore that God thou delightest in. Where is most delight, there is most admiration and adoration. Christ* is the delight of Angels, when he was incarnate, they bowed down to pry into that mystery; and now he is glorified, they look up to admire him; there is matter of admiration in *Christ*, all in him is not yet drawne out and discovered. *2 Thes.* 1. 10. *Christ* shall come so be admired in all them that believe. As its in a Country when its discovered, still new and new things are met with; so in *Christ*, *Rev.* 22. 1, 2. There the vision of *Christ* is compared to River-water, and that is alwayes new, fresh, and to a tree of life, with twelve manner of fruits every month. The vision and fruition of God is new, savoury and plea-

Most men look downwards, and are neither like Angels nor men, more like swine, wormes, moulcs. Many are loath to come near God, lest he should say, *Put off thy shoes from thy feet, put off thy earthlinesse; if we would have God look down from heaven, we must look up to heaven; David said, When I awake I am still with thee, Psal. 139. 18. He was with God when he lay down, and with him when he awaked and rose.*

The next thing is their wings, mentioned in the sixt verse: *every one had foure wings; and verse 8. under their wings on their four sides; and in the 8. they foure had their faces and their wings; and in the 9. their wings were joyned one to another; 11. their wings were stretched upward, two of every one was joyned one to another, and two covered their bodies.*

Angels are set forth to us in Scripture with wings: here with foure; In *Isa. 6.* and *Rev. 4.* with six wings each of them: and they are said to be winged for the agility of their natures, and swiftness of motion in executing their office. *Tertullian* saith, Every Spirit winged, they fly in a moment into any part of the world, to execute the commands of God. *Gabriel* came flying to *Daniel*, *Chap. 9.* and that swiftly. Astronomers observe, that from the centre of the earth (which is 3000. to the surface) up to the Sun is above foure millions of miles to the Firmament, where the fixed stars are, above fourescore millions of miles, and from thence to the place of the blessed, where Saints and Angels are, more millions then from the earth to the Firmament. So that according to their account, it must be above a 160. millions from heaven to earth; and this space the Angel came flying in a little time: we think a bullet out of a Musket flies swiftly, and it doth, for it hit the bird or mark ere the report is heard, and will flye 180. miles in an houre, according to its motion. The Sunne moves swifter 1160000. miles in one houre; the fixed stars about the æquinoctial move 42 millions of miles each houre; and yet the motion of an Angel is swifter, being a Spirit, and passing through the air without opposition; no creature in heaven or earth, moves faster than an Angel.

Their wings are foure; but the Seraphims in *Isa. 6.* and

*Omnis spiritus
ales est.*

*Clavius in
Sphæram,
Lectus de omni-
pot. Dei.*

Angels

four Beasts in *Rev. 4.* are set out by six wings each of them. A question hereupon arises; Why the Visions being correspondent, the Angels here are described onely with four wings. *Ans.* That paire of wings is wanting here did cover the face of *Isaiah* his Seraphims, and *Johns* four beasts; for they standing before the throne and face of God, were not able to behold such Majesty, brightnesse, and glory, with open face, although they were most pure creatures. We cannot looke upon the Sun in its strength and glory, but we cover our eyes with our hands; so they their faces with their wings: now here was something in stead of these wings, and did the office of those wings, and that was the Firmament, *Ver. 22.* *The likenesse of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures:* and *ver. 26.* *Above the firmament was the throne.* This firmament interposed between the lustre of divine glory, and their eyes, as the wings did in the Prophets, and Apostles vision, and therefore here was no need of that paire of wings; they were not before the throne, but *sub expanso*, and to doe works beneath the world.

Observ. That the glory and Majesty of God is such as no eye can fully behold; there wings, here the firmament is interposed between God and Angels. When God came down upon Mount *Sinai*, and manifested his majesty and glory, what said the people? *Speak thou to us, and not the Lord, lest we dye.* They could not endure the shine of *Moses* face, much lesse the lustre and majesty of the Lords; something must interveene, else man dyes for it.

Touching the wings of these our Angels, three things are laid downe; 1. The conjunction of their wings; 2. The Execution of them; 3. The use.

The Conjunction is in the 9. verse; *Their wings were joyned one to another;* and *ver. 11.* *Two wings of every one were joyned one to another.* The extremity of their wings when stretched out and ready to flye, did touch one another; so as they seem'd to have but one wing.

Observ. That there is mutuall love and much agreement between the Angels: the Connexion of their wings, notes the Connexion of their hearts; and the Hebrew is, As Sisters that love one another intirely, and work together most sweetly, so are the Angels, they love and labour together most sweetly; there be no divisions

לן חסן
חיותן
Fervida ad so-
ritatem suam.

Aliud stans, aliud sedens de republica sentis, Declam. in Ciceron.

Ala aqua iter excenta eleusta, conjuncta.

Murus sibi invicem tradunt operas ad exequenda Dei decreta.

divisions or distractions among them, what businesse soever is appointed, they all agree in; we men can hardly agree in any one businesse; so many men, so many minds: *Salust* told *Tullie*, that his mind was very changeable concerning the Common-wealth; and its true of most of us, what we allow now in matters of the State or Church, we condemne anon, and so are at agreement neither with others, nor with our selves; but Angelicall concord parallels, yea exceeds our discord; Angels are all love, peace, and unity.

2. That there is a blessed harmony in the works of God done by Angels, their wings goe evenly, joyntly, not one before another, above another, divided any way, but there is unity and uniformity in all their actions and operations. Gould we behold the actions and works of Angels, we should see such glory and beauty, as never was seen in the works of men. If we look upon a building that is uniforme, and every part proportionable, we are much taken with it: A garden that is drawn out exactly, and every thing in it set in order: An Army that keepeth ranke and posture, and proceeds in all things according to rule, how beautiful and comely are they? All the actions of Angels are such one runneth not before another, one is not divided from another, one disallows not what another doth, but their harmony and correspondency is such, that if a man could see the same, he would bee ravished with the workes of Angels, *Jam. 3. 16. Where envying and strife is, there is confusion; but among Angels there is no envie, no strife, so no confusion.*

3. That we should joyne our helps for furtherance of the works of God: Angels joyne their wings, and afford help to each other to doe the will of God; Devills and wicked men joyne together against God and his wayes, *Psal. 2. 2. The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsell together against the Lord, against his Anointed, &c.* And good men should joyne together their heads, their purses and abilities whatsoever, to further Gods worke. If Angels appeare and put forth their wings to doe the will of their God, let us appear and put forth our hands to do the work of our God.

The second thing about their wings is, they were stretched upwards, not let downe, drawne up, resting upon their bodies, but extended as ready for service as might be, *ver. 11.*

This notes unto us the readinesse of Angels to doe the will of Christ, their faces look up, attend their commands, and their wings are stretched out to flye about them as soon as they are made known; as a Hawke that is upon the wing, watches till the fowl rise, and then falls upon her, and flies after her immediately. Angels are upon the wing before the command goes out, and when its out, God shall not need to use motives or arguments to put them on. The manifestation of his will, is the strongest motive unto them; and it should be so with us: We pray that Gods will may be done on earth as its done in heaven; the meer manifestation of Gods will therefore should prevaile with us, as with Angels; but let God manifest his will, bring forth his strong arguments to move us, yet we have no wings, or if wings, not stretched forth, or if stretched forth, we rather flag then flye with them.

The third thing is the covering of the wings, *ver. 11.* two covered their bodies, their thighs, feet, *Isa. 6.2.* that is, their uncomely parts: which are in Scripture-phraze call'd *the feet*. One wing did cover the fore-part of their body, another their hinder parts.

Obs. 1. In this covering of their bodies, God propounds them a patterne of chastity and modesty unto us: Those parts are hid, which might uncovered, argue dis-reverence of God, or concupiscence in them, or be offensive unto men: God loves chaste spirits, and chaste behaviours: the Angels are very chaste, and would not have any undecent thing objected to divine view, whose authority and majesty they adore: No impure thing must come into the sight of God, therefore God ordered, *Exod. 20.26.* That there must be no steps to his Altar, lest the nakednesse of the Priests were discovered in their going up, and so offence given to God and man: and further, he appointed linnen breeches to cover the Priests nakednesse, *Exod. 28.42.*

2. It notes out to us that Angelicall nature is a thing hidden, and too high for us, while we are in our houses of clay, their natures are beyond the reach of mans brain, and that we are so far from the knowledge of Gods face, nature, and ability to behold them, that we cannot know and behold the lowest parts, the very feet of Angels, they are vail'd up from us: As too tran-

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*Vitruvius
lambinus, pul-
rem non asinigi-
mus.*

scendent for our capacities, we know not the natures of any creatures here below, not of a flower, a flye; we describe things, but do not, cannot define them: I would see the proudest of you all define the nature of a straw, as one preached in *Cambridge* to all the Scholars: if we know not the nature of these visibles, of bodies, then much lesse of Angels, and if not of Angels, least of all of God.

3. That men are apt to Idolize choice Instruments employed in Gods service, and therefore the Angels are covered with wings to prevent it. Such is the beauty, wisdom, strength, use and celerity of Angels in Gods service, that man is apt to deifie them. *John* falls down to worship before the feet of an Angel, *Rev.* 22.8. And when *Paul* and *Barnabas* had heal'd a creeple, the *Lycaonians* said, *The Gods are come downe to us in the likenesse of men*, and they would have sacrificed to them, *Act.* 14. And should the Angels appear to us in their natures without being covered up, we should take them to be Gods; but they will not have that honour, they will hide their beauty and excellency, and desire the glory onely be given to God.

The next thing we are to come unto, is their feet in the seventh verse.

V E R. 7.

And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calves foot, and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brasse.

Straight feet] They were feet of men, and by a Synecdoche, feet are put for legs and thighs; the *Septuagint* read it, *Their thighs were right or straight*; and therefore could not be the thighs or feet of beasts, which in the hams are with compasse and not straight: they were neither bending inward nor outward, but straight pillars: This types out to us;

*Columbarum
instar.*

1. That the wayes of Angels are all straight and right: for in Scripture are put for wayes; inward of the soul, outward of the whole man, *Pro.* 4. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet*; *Psal.* 119. 105.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet ; that is, all my actions; and Eccles. 5. 1 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God ; that is, thy thoughts, affections, will, reason, and all within: Take the feet of Angels for their thoughts, desires, wills, reason, actions, they are all right, there is no act of theirs void of reason, as the acts of brutes are, none done by rash motion or sudden passion, as too many of mens are, they goe not without warrant, and when they goe, they goe in the way appointed of God, never turne out, but are exact, keeping to his will.

2 They are firme, constant in their resolutions, and service for God: that is noted by feete in Scripture ; for feet are the basis and foundation of things, Exod. 30. 28. The Laver and his foote ; that is, his basis whereon he rested; mens feet or legs are the foundation whereon the body rests. In Eccles. 12. 13. they are called the strong men : and Cant. 5. 15. Christs legs are said to be as pillars of marble : and Scaliger saith, that mens firmnesse is in their feet, on which the burden of the whole body directly depends. Here then we have the firmnesse and constancy of Angels to go on in Gods work, no burden can make them buckle, no act, no force can put them out of the way, no wearinesse can make them sit still ; Angels will meet and stop Balaam, and give him commands; the Angel will have Lot out of Sodome.

*Firmitas homini
debeatur in pede
ad quem perstac-
bat omnis totius
corporis quod per
lineam rectam
incumberet, De
Subtil.*

The sole of their feet was like the sole of a Calves foot.

As it were the sole of a round foote, so the Hebrew signifieth both round, and a Calf that is fat, and hath round feet, smooth, round, and moveable to carry any way : the Septuagint hath it wing-
ed feet. Mercury the Poets god, was painted with shoes which had wings : This sets out to us, both the swiftnesse of Angels, of a globe, which before, and also their usefulnesse to move any way to doe service in any part of the world, like a Bowle, or Globe is equally disposed for motion into any of the four quarters of the world ; so are the Angels ready to move any way upon every occasion and hint from heaven: man cannot do so, one man is fit for one service, not for all; one is fit for counsel, another for war, a third for Sea, a fourth for Land, &c.

*Quasi planta pe-
dis rotundi : pe-
des rotundos, like
in rotas et spec-
tai
Cum calariibus,
Heracl.
Ad omnem occasi-
onem et nutum
Dei.*

They sparkled like the colour of burnished brasse.

Steel or Brasse being polished or burnished, shines very beauti-
ful

full, and sends out eye-dazling beames, such as have much glory in them; and by this colour of their feet, we are led into these observations.

Obser. 1. That the Angels are unpolluted in all their ministrations: they contract no filth, no soile to their feet; when they are in motion they are pure spirits, act purely, and abide most pure, their feet are like polished, not polluted, burnished, not blemished brass, and so hold forth to us an example of purity in our ministrations that wee should be conversant in them, so as to be unblemished, 1 Tim. 2. 8. lifting up holy hands, &c. 2 Pet. 3. 11. What manner of persons ought yee to be in all manner of holy conversation? here its answered, like Angels.

2 That the workes of God by Angels or men, done rightly with a streight foot, that is, done according to Gods will, have much glory & efficacy in them, they shine like the polished brass, there is their glory; and sparkle, there is their efficacy. When the Angel destroyed *Senacharibs* host, what glory and efficacy was in that work? When the Angel came to *Manoah*, and went up from him in a flame of fire, how glorious was this sight, how efficacious was the work in the heart of *Manoah*? *John* preached the truth with a right foot, and without delay, when called to it; and he was a burning and a shining light, *John* 5. 35. *Herod* found him so: *Mark* 6. 20. He feared *John*, knowing he was a just and holy man, the glory of his justice and holines shined into his head, and the power of them affected his heart; he knew, he feared: actions done according to Gods will, hold forth much of God in them; *1 Cor.* 14. 24. If any unbeliever come in and hear them prophecy, that is, according to the mind of God, carry the action as becomes the Church and the presence of God, he is convinced, and almost converted, and saith, God is in you of a truth: hee sees so much glory, feels so much power, that he can containe no longer, &c. *1 Ia.* 52. 7. Their feet are beautifull to your eyes, and their actions are efficacious to your hearts: Gods will is the Standard and measure of all actions, and when they are done according to it, they are very glorious and beautifull.

3 That they are chearful in the wayes and workes of God: they go not dully about their service, their feet doe shine, they have more delight in doing one act of Gods will, then we have

in doing al the natural acts of our lives; you shal find them in a sweet posture and frame always; *Rev. 4. 9. they give glory honour and thanks to God, and Rev. 5. they are brought in singing, and singing a new song, which notes their chearfulness, and intention of it: so in Luke 2. v. 13, 14. Angels are the Quiristers of heaven, they make heaven heavenly.*

The last part they are described by, is, their hands.

V E R S. 8.

They had the hands of a man under their wings.

Some would make sixteen hands to each living creature or face but that is not likely; we find no number set down, and therefore will be content to leave that undisputed, whether two, four, eight or sixteen; Hands they had, and hands of a man; and that under their wings, on their four sides.

The hand notes action: *Eccles. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeft to do, do it with thy might: So Prov. 3. 27. The Philosopher calls it the Instrument of Instruments, and saith, God hath given to man two special Organs, to the body the hand, to the soul reason; and look what use reason is to the soul, the hand is of the like use to the body: yea, soul, reason, body, are al beholden to the hand for the service that it doth, the great things in families, Cities, Kingdoms are done by the hand. *Scalig. saith, Nature hath armed man with three things; Reason, Speech, Hands. Reason is the hand of the understanding; Speech the hand of Reason, and Hand the Executresse of Speech, that doth the commands; all things would be as dead, if the hand did not quicken them by the spirit and motion of art.**

Obser. 1. That Angels are fit for service; they have hands, and hands are not made in vain; they are for work: where there are no hands, no power, strength, or way to put forth that power, there is no fittest for service; but Angels have power and wayes to execute that power; they have hands not for ornament, but for action:

2. That Angels do their works rationally, they have the hands of

of a man; look as men do manage the works of their hands judiciously and wisely, so do Angels; there is nothing defective, superfluous, perverse, rash, indiscreet, or culpable in their ministrations, they know all circumstances, and misse not in any: how wisely did the Angel manage the business with *Mary*? *Luke 1.28.* he salutes her, she feares; In the 30. vers. he comforts her, and tells her, she should conceive, and have such a son as never woman had; and when she doubted of it, ver. 34. *How shall this be, seeing I know not man?* ver. 35. the Angel tells her, *The Holy Ghost*, &c. And farther, see the wisdom of the Angel, he tells her, ver. 36. that her Cousin *Elizabeth* had conceived a son in her old age, and that was the sixth month with her, and how ever thou thinkest it impossible for thee that art young without man to conceive, and for her that is old with man to conceive, ver. 37. yet nothing is impossible with God.

3. That knowledge must issue into actions: Angels are full of eyes, and full of hands too; their actions are answerable to their knowledge, *Rev. 4.8.* *They are full of eyes within, and they rest not day and night*; if they have no service in the world beneath, they will be praising God above; they know much, and therefore act much. Knowledge without practice is little worth; if hid from others, it is as nothing, as not being, saith the Poet: *Unlesse Learning Knowledge be improv'd, its of no account: the Egyptians painted a tongue, and a hand under it, to shew that Knowledge and Speech is efficacious and good, when that which is knowne and said is done.* What good doth the unpracticall speech of Golden-tongued men; Let men be *Chrysostomes*, golden-headed and golden-mouthed, if they be not golden-handed too, it's nothing. God would not have us all eye, and rest in knowledge, *Joh. 13.17.* *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye doe them;* and *Rev. 22.14.* *Blessed are they that doe his commands, that they may have right to the tree of life: happinesse is intailed to doing, not knowing*: and the Angels seem to finde greater happinesse in doing Gods commands, as broad in the world, then standing alwayes in his presence, *Psa. 103.20.* *They hearken unto the voyce of his word, if he bid them go they are gone, and account it their greatest honour to be doing; they have hands, and would not be idle: knowledge without action, is a man without arms; it's wine shut up in the vessel* the

Scire enim nihil est nisi te
scire hoc sciat al-
ter, Pers.

Quid prodest
χρυσον κεφάλιν
τον ἀργυρον
ἀργυρον. Nazian.

that doth good to none, and will corrupt at last, and mar the vessell, such knowledge will be like the poyson that lies long in the body, and at last kills without remedy.

4. That Angels are great agents, and do much service; they have hands on their foure sides, at least they had four hands, and they were able to do much, and great service; some make more, and no hand of theirs is idle: one Angel can do more then thousands of men, witnesse that great slaughter in a night, and other things formerly spoken of. *Briareus*, a great doer is said to have an hundred hands.

5 That God doth carry on his works here in the world by invisible vertue, by hands under wings, by wayes and means not seen: There is *vires plastica* in the womb, which forms and perfects the birth, yet is not seen; and in the womb of the world, God hath *vires plastice*, which form and perfect his works, yet not seen; much is done by the power of Angels, yet their power not seen. Mighty things are done by Gods Spirit in the Ordinances in the Assembly, in our hearts, and yet Gods Spirit is an invisible agent: the Minister, the Word would not do it, unlesse some invisible vertue went along therewith, *Zach. 4. 2, 3.* though none were found to powr oil into the Lamps, yet God had olive trees were not thought of, nor seen: *Zachary* saw not the Candlestick, Bowle, Lamps, or two Olive trees, till the Angell awakened him, and made him see, that God had wayes to communicate vertue unto the Church he knew not of, and that though the Church were poor, low, not able to make a considerable Army to carry them to *Jerusalem*, and plant them there, yet he had his Spirit to work it out for them; and therefore saith, Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, *2 Thes. 2. 8. The Lord shall consume Antichrist by the Spirit of his mouth*: and so the two witnesses, *Fire goes out of their mouths and devours their adversaries, Rev. 11. 5.* in an invisible way, by a secret work: It was a hand under the wing that made peace betwixt *Scotland* and us, that gathered this Parliament, that hath, and doth keep it; it's invisible vertue that hath made them unanimous and magnanimous; invisible vertue that upholds this kingdom, that restrains the remainder of wrath, that daunts the adversary; that hath shaken the Prelacy, and brought forth the great things in our dayes: it's the hand

hand under the wing that hath opened the hearts and purses of many to further the great service in hand.

6. That we are to do Gods works without noise or notice of our selves; Angels that are agents for God, have their hands under their wings, their actions are seen, but not their hands. In *Judg. 13.* when *Manoab* catechized the Angel, and asked him, *What is thy name?* v. 17. the Angel would not tell him, but said; *Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?* ver. 18. And you shall not finde the names of above two Angels in Scripture, *Gabriel* and *Michael*. Angels are jealous of Gods glory, and had rather conceal their hands and names, then God should lose the least degree of his glory: for *Manoab* would therefore have known his name, that he might have honoured the Angel afterward; and we are very apt to look at the instrument, and neglect the principall: its wisdom to muffle up our selves, and to hold forth God as much as may be, *Mat. 5. 16.* *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, &c.* he doth not say, that they may see you, but see your good works, and glorifie your father, not you: As Fishers, they would have the bait seen, not themselves; they would catch the fish with their bait, not scare them with their sight, *Mat. 6. 1.* *Take heed you do not your almes before men to be seen of them; almes must be given, but we and our hands must be hid.* *Paul* exhorts the *Philippians*, to hold forth the word of life, *Phil. 2. 16.* not themselves, but the Word of God, which is the word of life.

7. That their operations and presence are together; they are not in heaven, and so work on earth, or in one part of the world and work in another, but their hands are under their wings, whither their wings do carry them, there they act, and not elsewhere. The Angel came down to stir the water in the pool, *Joh. 5. 4.* and cure the Party that slept in firs; they have not that power to work at any distance.

8. That Angelicall vertue and nature is hid from us, it's too high for our capacity; their hands, their operative vertue we cannot discover, or see into: a little of the Angels is presented to us by their faces, wings, feet, hands, &c. but the distinct knowledge of Angels as Angels is reserv'd til we are like the Angels in heaven; therefore we must not intrude into those things which we have not seen, vainly puffed up with our fleshly minds, but be content

content to be ignorant of their natures, and many of their actions and excellencies, till we come to glory.

Now from their parts we come to their motions; and its said; Ver. 9. *They turned not when they went, they went every one streight forward.*

Ver. 12. *And they went every one streight forward, whither the Spirit was to go they went, and they turned not when they went.*

Ver. 14. *And the living creatures ran, and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.*

They turned not when they went. Which way soever they moved, they turned neither face, wings nor bodies, but went streight forward, there was no digression, regression, wandering, nor circulation, but their motion was streight; they moved in *linea recta*, they move, and move not impertinently, but directly. By this motion of Angels, is set out Gods government in the world; they are his agents, our Prophet seems to crosse himself in ver. 14. its said, *they ran and returned, and ver. 17. they returned not when they went;* here in this 9. *they turned not when they went:* this knot must be loosed, or else our Prophet will suffer.

The Solution of this doubt is, that the Angels being in their work appointed of God, went on without turning or looking back til they came to the issue and end of it, till they came to the place appointed, and then they returned unto God to give account of their service, and to receive new instructions. They went not back after the work was begun, but after it was ended; what ever difficulties interposed in the way, none of them could drive back, or divert the Angels, till their work was done, and then they presently returned.

Obser. 1. That the works of God in ordering the things of the world are streight: Angels are as Gods hands, and in them is the agency of his work, and they go streight on, & there be no windings, no turnings in their operations; the works of God seem crooked to us, but there is nothing crooked in them. A Carpenter that builds a house hath some peeces of timber long, some short, some bowing, some streight, of all which he builds a goodly house, but some rude ignorant fellow understands not the reason of that diversity, and when the work is done there is nothing

seen defective, but all is streight and perfect; so in the works of providence and divine dispensations in the world, they seem crooked, (and therefore some have called providence crooked and winding) but no such thing is in them, *Psal. 18. 30. His wayes are perfect, Deut. 32. 4. His work is perfect;* take the work of creation, providence, redemption, they be without obliquity, deformity, or defect, but men are not so, and the reason is given, *for all his wayes are judgement,* that is, all his administrations, all his doings are judicious, right and equall.

Constantia est in proposito, perseverantia in opere.
Charles the 5. his Motto was, Plus ultra.
Falicitatis index ultimus dies, Solon.

Antiq. l. i. c. 12.

2. That Angels persist in and carry on their work; they are constant and persevere, they turn not back, they give not over, but proceed to the end; they are not slothfull, weary, unfaithfull, but active, lively, holding on to the end; This may be usefull to our thoughts: Angels go on, and lively in their work, shall we be lazy? they persevere, shall we draw back, or turne aside? *Lots wife* looked back, & she was turned in to a pillar of Salt; *Gen. 19. 26.* she looked to the things behind, which was unwarrantable, & God did severely punish her, she had part of *Sodomes* judgements, which were brimstone, salt, and burning, *Deut. 29. 23.* And she was made a pillar of salt to season after ages, with the fear not only of backsliding; but also of back-looking. *Josephus* saith, he saw the pillar in his dayes, which was neer two thousand years after; but *Borchardus* that liv'd some 300. yeers since, saith, it was in his dayes. *Adrichomius* saith, its yet extant; and the *Targum* hath it, that it will indure to the day of judgement. Whether this materiall pillar be extant or not, is doubtfull; Christ hath set up a spirituall pillar, that will endure to the end, to make us faithfull to the end: Remember *Lots wife*, *Luke 17. 32.* Look back and die, go on in the wayes and commands of God and live. It was the reproach of the *Israelites*, that they would have gone back to *Egypt*, and they dyed for it in the wilderneffe, *Matth. 10. He that endures to the end shall be saved*: and *Luke 9. 62. No man having put his hand to the Plough, and looking back is fit for the kingdome of heaven.* A man plowing, if he look back, endangers the Oxen which plow, and must needs make crooked furrows, and mar all: so one that hath begun to plow in Gods field, if he look back, he is unfit for heaven, *Exod. 17. 12. Moses hands were steady till the going down of the Sun,* and so must ours till the Sun set, till our lives end:

Gal. 4. 9.

Gal. 4.9. How turne ye againe to weak and beggerly Elements? Gal. 5.7. Ye did run well: Its dangerous when either of these come in against a people; but the godly have a promise, Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

3. That they keep close to the work in hand, to what is in-
joyn'd, they divert neither one way nor other, as they give not
over, so they turn not aside upon any pretence whatsoever, but
hasten to the execution of what is commanded; how un-Angeli-
call are we that have such roving spirits in all our imployments?
though we look not back, yet we look aside. God complains;
This people draw nigh with their lips, but their heart is far from me; they
are in my house, and in my work; but their hearts are in neither,
they look towards me, as if they were my people, but their hearts
look another way, as if they were worldlings, hypocrites; like
Watermen, they row one way, and look another, Ezek. 33. 31
With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth
after their covetousnesse; we are too guilty of this evill, our hearts
are seldome at home. What's said of the Harlots feet, Pro. 7. 11.
They abide not in her house; the same may be said of our hearts, they
abide not in the house: When you walk abroad and keep the
path, the Spaniel that is with you ranges over much ground, and
seldome is in the path; so it is with our hearts, we may be in the
path of duties, but our hearts ranging over the world, heaven
and hell, Jam. 5. 15. Elias prayed earnestly; in the Original, its be pray-
ed in prayer, intimating, a man may be at prayer, in prayer, and yet
be a prayerlesse man, not pray, and that because the heart is not
in it: So in hearing, you may hear and not hear, &c. What's the
reason Christ knocks at the doore so oft, and is not let in? the
heart is dead asleep, or abroad.

4. That Angels have the scope and marke in their eye which
they aime at: They went every one streight forward; the Hebrew
is, to the way or passage of his face, that path was before his face;
that is, they went thither where their eyes or faces were fixed;
as they look not back nor aside, so they always look upon the
mark, each goeth forward to that is before him; this keeps them
on to the work, and in the work, they have the marke in their
eye, *Prov. 4. 25. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids looke*
streight before thee; look to the charge appointed, to that is right,

לֹא יָסֹבֵב

They fetched
no compasse.Ad transsum,
faciei sua aut
transsum faciei
sua obiectum.
So Piscat.

to that is set before thee of God, and this will quicken thy industry, Phil. 3. 13, 14. Forgetting those things which are beinde, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I presse towards the mark. Paul had not his eye upon what was done bygone, or on what was upon either side of him, but upon that was before him, the mark, heaven, eternall life was the mark in his eye, and he pressed after them, he was as intent upon them, and as pursuance of them, as he was in the work of persecuting the Saints, he reached after them as the one thing necessary, we set not the mark before us, instead of heaven, Christ, eternall life; we have the world, our pleasures, and a multitude of things in our eyes, and so we are divided, and do nothing.

5 That Angels minde and pursue every one his own work, not others: They went forward to the work, object, mark set before their faces; he that had his work designed him in the East, minded not his work lay in the West; each acted his own part, and fell not upon any thing concern'd another, although their employments lay the same way; what was before their faces, that they did and nothing else: Devils compasse the earth, and meddle with all men, and with all matters; its not so with the good Angels, they kept their station, and do keep order, they intermeddle not with ought concerns them not. The Apostle would have Christians to be Angelicall, 1 Thes. 4. 11. Study to do your own businesse, those things concerne our generall and particular calling, if men wil with their wit and curiosity run out of their bounds, they are extravagant and busie-bodies. Some think because they are neighbours, they may meddle in all contentions; because Subjects, they may interpose in all State-affairs; because Christians, deal with others sins; but this is to break the hedge, to break out of our own callings into others, and such though they seem great doers, do nothing, 2 Thes. 3. 11. There are some among you that walk disorderly, working not at all, they are busie-bodies: What busie and do nothing? Yes because they do things impertinent unto them, unfruitfull, unprofitable, out of place. When Peter medl'd too far in Johns matters; What shall this man do? Christ takes him up sharply, What is that to thee? Joh. 21. 22. And some thinke this made Peter so sharp against that sin afterwards, and to look upon it as bad as theft and murther, 1 Pet. 4. 15, Let none of you

κατα οὐρανὸν
διὰ καὶ.

Assequitur nulla
qui sequitur
multa; Is Ange-
licus qui nec
multis nec va-
riis est.

τὰ ἴδια περὶ
τῶν.

μὴ ἐργαζομέ-
νες, ἀλλὰ καὶ
ἐρηρῶ ζοῦντες.

suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy-body in other mens matters.

They ran, and returned.

Here is the quality of their motion, it was swift, they had wings to flye, and feet to run: much hath been spoken of the Angels swiftnesse; I shall here therefore touch upon their returne, when their work is done, they make no stay, they linger not at all, but return with all speed; when God sends them out, or calls them in, their motion is very speedy; its set out here by a flash of lightning, that is the soonest into the world, and out again of any sensible creature, in a moment it is in your houses, and out again, in a moment it shines from East to West, and is gone, its very glorious and marvellous active. Angels are Cherubims of glory, *Heb. 9. 5.* and the most active of all Gods works, and when their work is finished they retire immediately; as lightening when its come to its period, doth reciprocate and fall back into its self without delay; so do the Angels returne to him sent them out, to know his farther pleasure, and to do him more service.

Obs. 1. That Angels in their services are glorious and terrible: They are like the lightning, which shines, dazles, and doth dreadful things, *Judg. 13. 20.* When *Manoah* and his wife saw the Angel go up to heaven in a flame of fire, they fell down on their faces to the ground, and thought they should dye, *ver. 22.* It was a received opinion among the *Jews*, that if they saw God or an Angel, they should dye upon it, *Judg. 6. 22, 23.* *Gideon* a mighty man of valour, cries out, *Alas, O Lord God, because I have seen an Angel of the Lord face to face; and the Lord said, Fear not, thou shalt not die:* If they had a vision being awake, they apprehended death, but they never had experience of any that dyed upon any such occasion, this rose rather from the apprehension of glory & majesty in God & Angels, and consciounes of their own weaknes and guilt, as not able to abide the presence of those glorious creatures, that came immediately from the presence of the glorious God; and we find that some have been much affrighted, and almost struck dead, at the presence of the holy Angels, *Mat. 28. 2, 3, 4.* An Angel comes from heaven, whose countenance was like lightning, and his rayment as the Sun, and for fear of him the Keepers of the Sepulchre

Ερρηγνυσθησαν οὖν οἱ
 ἄγγελοι αἱματι
 βίαιος.

pulchre did shake and became like dead men, there was no spirit left in them, the glory of the Angel did exanimate them; they are glorious and terrible in their ministrations; and so should the Ministers of the Gospel, the Angels of the Church be: Nazianzen's faith of Basil, his speech was thunder, and his life lightning. Such were James and John, Boanerges, sons of thunder, Mark. 3. 17. They were terrible to sinners in their preaching, like thunder and lightning.

2. That account is to be rendred to God of all our services; whom God sets a work, he will reckon with; Angels return and become responsible to God their Lord and Master, those mighty and glorious creatures, when their work is finished, do willingly and cheerfully return, and give in their answer; God looks for it and they delight to do it; and, account we must all give of our work in the world, Rom. 14. 12. Every one of us shall give account of himself unto God; God will say to us, Come, give account of your Stewardships, Luke 16. 2. Every one hath a talent, is a Steward, hath some trust committed to him, and he must not think to run, and never return; let men act how they will, return they shall, be they never so great, be they Princes, Magistrates, Commanders, &c. Eccles. 12. God shall bring every worke unto Judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil; both the work and the workman must be questioned, Mat. 12. 36. Of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account of in the day of Judgement.

3. That Angels are lively and unwearable in their negotiations they run and return as a flash of lightning; when they had done great service in the world, they were as lively at the end as it was at the beginning, they return back with as much life and speed as they went forth, and were ready for new employments; they return'd as to give account of what was done, so to receive new commands and work. This is a patterne for us all, that in the works of God those employments he calls us to, we grow not weary of; one sin fits for another, and men are unwearable in that trade; So one duty should fit for another, and we should never be tyred in our spirits, though we be in our bodies, Gal. 6. 9. Let us not be weary in well-doing, the wicked are weary of and in well-doing; What profit is it, say they, that we keep in Commandements, and that we walke humbly before the Lord of Hosts?

Ad latitiam
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Mal. 3. 14. When will the new Moon be gone, that we may sell corn, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat? Amos 8. 5. Pl. 36. 3. He hath left off to be wise, and to doe good. Mal. 1. 13. They said, What a weariness is it! and snuffed at it, and brought that was torn, lame, feke; but the godly are never weary of Gods work, though sometimes they are weary in it, through the strength of the flesh, weakness of grace, and other discouragements, but they having tasted how gracious the Lord is, are not, will not, cannot be weary of his service; his Commandements are not grievous to them.

*Defidia, est
mors superflua,
vacua est vita.*

4. That they seek not themselves, but the honour and glory of their Master, they stay not when their work is done, upon pleasure, curiosity to see or know any thing, but immediately returne, and are taken up wholly with the glorifying of God; they are attentive, watching his Commands, for they look up; they are intent upon his worke, they turne not to either side, looke not backe, but goe streight forward; they contend for his glory, they runne, returne, and give account, and would have new Commissions, be at work againe, and have God to be glorified to their utmost abilities. *Isa. 6. 3. Holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory; they see God so glorious, excellent, and holy in himselfe, so glorious in all his works, that they minde not themselves, but God, and make it their onely and great designe, to glorifie God, Rev. 4. 8, 9. And this is our duty and comfort if done. 1 Cor. 10 31. whether you eat or drinke, &c.* The glory of the infinite, holy, wise, and great God, should be precious to us, wee should attend his commands, intend his worke, contend against all lets, within or without, and promote his worke and glory to our utmost. That worke is not referr'd to Gods glory, but our gaine, credit or profit, is a dead worke. The School-men call for a right intention in every work, as that which animates and inlivens the same: and though wee cannot actually intend Gods glory alwayes in every thing, yet there should be a vertuall intention of it. A Bowle runs, an Arrow flies by vertue of that arme first sent them forth, and all our actions should proceed in the strength of a morning or primary intention of Gods glory.

Omnibus operibus nostris celestis intentio adjungi debet. Aquinas.

One thing yet remains touching the motion of Angels, namely, the efficient cause of their motion, and it's the Spirit, set down in these words;

V E R. 12. *Whither the Spirit was to goe they went.*

SOME doubt there is, what is meant by the Spirit here, not the counsell or will of the Angels; and so the sense to be, that they went which way they had a minde; whither their owne wils and spirit carried them, and my reason is, because they are brought in here as servants and officers; and therefore not to be left to their own wils, but to be under command, and at the will of another; Souldiers goe not where they please, but where their Generall pleaseth. By Spirit, we are to understand, neither the will of Angels, nor winds, nor the soule of man, (for Spirit in Scripture doth signifie all these) but the essentiall and eternall Spirit of God; and this is evident by the 20th verse, *Whithersoever the Spirit was to goe they went*. it's not said, *whithersoever their Spirit was to goe they went*, but *whithersoever the Spirit*, that is, the Holy Ghost, co-essentiall and coequall with the Father and the Sonne; whither that Spirit of wisdom and power led them, thither they went; when that Spirit bad them returne they returned, as that Spirit moved them, so they moved.

Object. The Spirit of God neither goes nor moves from place to place, being infinite; how then can this be meant of the Spirit?

Non mutatione loci, aut essentiali, sed declaratione potentiae & gratia.

Ans. This is spoken *humanitus*, after the manner of men, in regard of the vision *Ezekiel* had, it seemed so to him, but the Spirit being infinite, neither goes nor moves by reall change of place or essence, but by declaration of it's power and grace. When the Spirit, or God doth that is unusuall, then they are said to come, and be present. Again, the Spirit went in the Angels, not simply in it self; there was in the Angels *imperium & impetus Spiritus*, the impression and impression of the Spirit, which carried them on.

Observ. That Angels, although exceeding wise, full of knowledge, active, and able to doe great service, yet are not at their owne dispose, they move not at their own pleasure, they went not where they listed; Let the abilities of the creature be never so rare and excellent, they must be under the power of a Superior, they must be ordered and directed by a higher cause. Angels themselves are not Lords of themselves, they are not *suuini*; much less men than are lower then Angels, 1 *Cor. 6. 19.* Men are bought, and they must be his servants, at his dispose that hath bought them, and that is God.

God: And therefore they must not abuse their bodies and soules to fornication, any sinne, but glorifie God with both.

2. That it's the Spirit of God is the great Agent that sets Angels a worke, they performe nothing by their own vertue and strength, but at the command and impulse of the Spirit they act, they set out, proceed, finish, return; As it's in a Ship at Sea, there are the windes without to drive it, and the Pilot within to guide it to what place he pleaseth; so here is the command of the Spirit *ab extra*, and the *impetus intra*, to carry out and order these; the great things Angels have done, have been done by the Spirit of God; if they suggest good thoughts; if an Angel strengthen Christ in his agony; if they reveale mysteries and things to come to *Daniel* and others; if contend against Princes, and agitate the great affaires of the kingdome, its by vertue of the Spirit of God, that works efficaciously in them, and in good men that are imployed for the glory of God, the publique good of Church or State. When choice garments were to be made for *Aaron*, *Exod.* 28. 3. the 31. and *v.* 3. Cunning and carved work in gold, silver and brasse was to be made for the Tabernacle, it was the Spirit of God that inabled and acted men for that service. When great things were to be done by the Judges in *Israel*, it's said, The Spirit came upon them, and the Spirit moved them, *Judg.* 3. 10. The Spirit of the Lord came upon *Othniel*, and hee judged *Israel*, and went out to war, and the Lord delivered the enemies into his hand, and his hand prevailed. So *Jephthah*, *Judg.* 11. 29. and *Sampson*, *Chron* 13. 25. The Spirit came upon them, and moved them, and they did great things; And this is set down to let us see, that it's the Spirit doth all in the Magistracy, and in Martiall affairs, in City and Camp; yea, and Church too, *Zach.* 4. 6. *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts*: oft mention is made of the Lord of Hosts, and truths that concern the Temple, are sealed up with it in this Prophet more then others; because there needed to such a work as building the temple, the power of a mighty God, so many, so mighty were the enemies; yet God would not do it by the might and power *Zorubbabel* had, but by his Spirit.

3. That Angels are led, and easily led by the Spirit, *they went*; it notes their duciblenesse or tractablenesse; they went without dispute,

dispute, without delay, immediately, cheerfully, and they went whether the Spirit was to go, that is, whether the Spirit would have them go; the Spirit is so infinitely wise, holy and good, that even Angels doe freely and fully submit to the conduct of it; and therefore it is, that they go streight forward, that there is no crookednesse in their works; that they doe such speedy and honourable service; and if such glorious, able, and perfect creatures bee willingly led by the Spirit, shall wee that are base and beggerly refuse the manuduction of the Spirit? if so, we forsake the choicest mercy: for *Rom. 8. 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sonnes of God*, be they Angels or men. It seems there are but few that are led by the Spirit of God, because he saith, *As many as are led*, intimating, all are not, few are: there be other spirits that lead men; there is a spirit of envy, *1 Jam. 4. 5.* of the world, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* of whoredomes, *Hos. 4. 12.* of securitie, *Isa. 29. 10.* a spirit of errour, *1 John 4. 6.* of Antichrist, *ver. 3.* and by these most men are not only led, but driven, quenching, grieving, vexing and resisting the good Spirit of God, more like devils then Angels: but let us when we have *imperium*, or *impetum*, *monitum*, or *motum Spiritus*, let us say, whether the Spirit will have us go we will go, what that will have us do, we will do; offer up our selves, freely and fully to the conduct of the Spirit, and that will lead you into all truth, and into the land of uprightnesse. It's an argument you are of the world, if you receive not the Spirit of truth, and submit not to the guidance thereof, *John 14. 17.*

V E R. 13.

As for the likenesse of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures, and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went out lightning.

THE

THe Hebrew word notes a Torch or burning wood, where the fire and flame are more tenacious and strong, *titiones*, fire-brands, that are lively, and flaming, heating and lightning. In this verse is set out, not the figure and shape of the living

living creatures, that was done in the 10th verse; but the colour of their faces: which is described,

First, by similitudes.

1. They are liken'd to burning coals of fire.

2. To lumps.

Secondly, by the motion of it, *It went up and down among the living creatures.*

Thirdly, by the operation and efficacy of it, *lightning went forth of it.*

For the better understanding of this dark verse; wee must consider, that the Lord Jesus Christ, being exceedingly offended with the wickednesse of the *Jewes*, is presented in the vision to the Prophet, sitting as an angry Judge upon the throne, ready to take vengeance on them for their sins; they were Idolatrous, oppressive, prophane, ingratefull, slighting, and persecuting the prophets; therefore Christ comes arm'd against them with zeale and fury, and suffer they must: hereupon the Angels being inflamed with the zeal and indignation of their Lord and Master, are said to be like burning coals and lumps. When men have a holy anger against sinne and sinners, and are zealous for God, how doe their faces burn and glow, and their eyes sparkle? so was it here, the Angels were affected much to see the Lord Christ so wronged by a company of sinfull wretched men; whereupon their colour became fiery, their faces burned with zeal, and their eyes sparkled, and they were ready to execute the sentence of the Judge upon this delinquent people.

It went up and down among the living creatures.

The fire and flame that stood not still, but was in perpetuall motion, *Mithballechesb*, it made it self to walk of its own accord and pleasure; it went up and down; it, that was fire went up and downe among those foure formed creatures: some make it the likeness and appearance it selfe that went up and down, but it's better to understand it of the fire which is distinct from the likeness of the creatures, and it's the vigour of Christs Spirit. Vertue came out from Christ; the King and Judge upon the Throne, which was like fire and flame, to prepare, quicken, and actuate these spirits to a fuller execution of divine pleasure.

It was light, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

Here you have the operation of this fire: *it was light*, that is, it did inlighten the Angels; they saw by this light what was to be done in this great deligne of Christ in saving the innocent, and punishing the guilty. Out of it went forth lightning; that is, the effect of it was dreadfull unto men, as lightning is; the judgements of Christ executed by Angels in the world, work effectually for the benefit of the godly, and for the undoing of the wicked.

Observ. 1. That the Lord Christ doth use Angels in the execution of his judgements upon sinners; an Angel smote *Herod, Sannacheribs* host, *Pharaohs* first-born, the *Sodomites*, *Psal.* 35. 5. 6. it is the Angel of the Lord that chafeth and persecutes the wicked.

2. That Angels are zealous, forward and effectually in executing judgements upon delinquents; they are burning Coals, *Hebr.* 1. 7. they are called a flame of fire; fire is hot, and notes their zeal and forwardnesse; its active and consuming, which notes their effectualnesse: Angels are like the fire that fell upon *Elijahs* sacrifice, which consumed the sacrifice, the wood, stones, dust, and licked up the water, *1 King.* 18. 38. So effectually was that fire, that nothing could stand before it; and when the Lord Christ sends out Angels none can stand before them, they are so zealous of, and effectual in the execution of his judgements. The wicked are but as the wood, stones, dust and water, these flames of fire will consume them. This should quicken Magistrates, and those be armed with authority, to be zealous and forward in punishing malefactors, and executing judgement upon delinquents. *Rom.* 13. 4. The sword is not given them in vain, they are revengers of Gods quarrell, and it is Angelicall to execute wrath upon them that do evil; it was *Sauls* sin that he spared *Agag*, but *Samuels* glory that he slewed him in pieces; he was zealous, forward and effectually in it; so *Ashur* removing his mother *Maachab* from being Queen, because she had made an Idoll in a grove, which he cut down, *2 Chron.* 15. 16. he brake her Idoll in pieces, and burnt it. Those are appointed of God to see justice done, if they doe it not, become guilty themselves. Old *Eli* a Judge in *Israel*, because he was too partiall towards his sons, God was angry, and his end was sad. *Levi* the 11th, King of *France*, having pardoned a murderer twice,

suing againe for his life, said, What, dost thou ask pardon againe? *Iam verum homicidium perpetrasti.* this is the third murder thou art guilty of: his soole standing by, said, The other two are thine, who didst pardon them, this is his first; had justice been executed then upon him, hee would never have fallen into this. So another *Louis* having pardoned a murderer, and afterward reading that in the 106. *Psalme* v. 3. *Blessed are they that keep judgement, and he that doth righteousness at all times*; presently recalled the pardon, and said, That Prince which doth not punish delinquents when hee may, is no lesse guilty before the Lord, then if he himselfe had done the fact. Let those therefore that it concernes, be zealous of, ready to, and effectually in the execution of justice upon delinquents.

Non minus coram Deo reus est quam si ipse perpetrasset.

3. That Angels have new influence from Christ, suitable to the Ministration they are to be employed in; though Angels bee creatures of much knowledge, wisdom, strength, speed, and usefulness, yet when Christ is to employ them, they must have new vertue and influence; it went up and downe among the living creatures: Let them bee as burning coals, they have need of more heat; let them bee as lamps, they have need of more light, their services are great, and Christ contributes unto them continually: as they have new instructions, so new accessions and additions of vertue which are needfull to their callings and operations. If they have need of divine vertue to farther them in their operations, much more have we need of fresh supplies. *Ioh. 15. 5. Without me ye can do nothing*; hee saith not, you may doe something, or you can doe little, but plainly, *without me you can do nothing*; it's the vertue and influence of Christ which enables Angels and men to doe the duties of their places and callings, *Phil. 4. 13. I can doe all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*; when He sets upon the Throne, sends out fire and flame, light and heat to strengthen us, then can wee doe all things, *1 Cor. 12. 9.* There are difference of administrations, but the same Lord; it's the Lord Christ, that appoints the administration of men and Angels, that gives direction about them with supplies of grace and strength, to exercise them; when wee goe about any employments of our generall and particular callings, wee should consider our owne impotency, and looke up to Christ, who hath all fullnesse, and is ready to send out vertue to supply all our wants; therefore *Paul* tels the *Philippians*, Chap. 4. v. 19.

Quæ ad singulares vocationes & effectiones eorum sunt necessaria.

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.

4. That the divine vertue comes from Christ, is an active thing; it went up and down, it rested not. Men have sought after the perpetuall motion, and lo, here it is: this vertue acted continually in the Angels; it went not by a transitive motion, from one Angel to another, but the motion was immanent, continually acting in them, and therefore it is called fire, which is a living active thing. The Word of God was as fire. *Jer. 20. 9. His Word was within mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay;* it overcame him, and quickened him up to his work, when he thought to preach no more; many a Christian thinks to hear, pray, read, meditate, receive no more, but there is vertue gone out from Christ, that will walk up and down in them, and cause them to fall to it again: that vertue comes forth from Christ, is no dull thing. *1 Cor. 15. 10. Paul had fire from Christ, and it set him a work; I laboured more abundantly then they all;* see how active he was, he exceeded all the rest of the Apostles; and how came that about? what metall was he made off? he had fire from Christ, *I was not I, but the grace of God that was with mee*, that went up and down in him, and fired his affections and Spirit. *David, Psal. 9. 3. thought to be silent, and not to speak any more before the wicked, I, even from good conference he refrained;* but what was the issue? *my heart was hot within mee;* the vertue and fire he had from Christ began to work, *while I was musing, the fire burned and flamed on, then I spake;* He could hold no longer: So *Acts 4. 20. We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.*

5. That actions done by divine vertue, afford light and lightning: the fire went up and down among the Angels, put them upon execution of judgement; and from hence, (these actions being so done) prove light and lightning to the world; they are seen, and seen far. They are light to the godly: when Angels execute Gods judgements upon sinners, the Saints see much in it; they see matter of fear and praise; of feare, in that Gods power, wrath, and hatred are manifested in them against sinne and sinners: of praise, in that themselves are delivered, and justice is performed. *Psal. 58. 10, 11. The righteous shall rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance,*

ance, hee shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked: when the wicked are taken away by a divine stroke, by the hand of justice, and God hath the glory of his justice, the righteous rejoyce at it: but is that all? no, *He washeth his feet in the blood of the wicked,* that is, by this judgement he fears and reformes; it's a metaphor taken from the practice of those parts, where they went bare-foot, -or with Sandals, and so contracted much filth, and used to wash and cleanse their feet when they came in; so here, the godly seeing the hand of God upon the wicked, feares, and judges himself for his sins, purges his conscience and affections, and stands now in aw of that God who hath stricken the wicked for those sinnes, which he himself in part is guilty of. *Waldus,* a man of note in *Lions*, seeing one struck dead in his presence, he washed his hands in his blood, for presently he gave almes to the poor, instructed his family in the true knowledge of God, and exhorted all that came unto him to repentance and holiness of life.

They are lightning to the wicked, that is, dreadfull and confounding. In this worke of executing judgement, as they are lamps to light the godly, so they are burning coales, and lightning to destroy the wicked. How terrible was the destroying Angel when the plague was in *Dauids* dayes? *Rev. 16.* when the Angels powred out their vials of wrath, how dreadfull were they? men blasphemed and repented not, to give glory to God.

VER. 15.

Now, as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheell upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.

WEe have done, through divine vertue, two parts of the Vision and now are comming to the third; That of the wheels, which hath its darknesse and difficulties; and here the glory of God in his providence is considerable from earthly things and second causes.

In the Vision of the wheels, two things I shall present unto you:
First, the signification.

Secondly, the description of these wheels,

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What

Quasi auriga.

Ipsius nomen vocatum est hic orbis, or, ipsa vocata sunt orbis, Jun.

גלגל

Iuxta autem conrotationes orbis, or, ipsa vocata sunt orbis, Jun.

Orbe rotundato sidera quaque micant.

What these wheels may signifie, there is great variety of opinions; with all which I will not trouble you. Wheels by a *Synecdoche*, some think, is put for a Chariot, in which God is presented to the Prophet, guarded with Angels on every side, who stand with great reverence and readinesse to doe his will; and by this Chariot they understand the Majesty, Glory, Providence and Kingdome of God, in which he rules all things at his pleasure, as a Waggoner or Pilot; and by the wheels the Immensity, Eternity, celerity, perspicacity, and efficacy of God in his operations. Some think by Chariots, is mea't the Church, and by the wheels the Apostles. These are thoughts of men, we will therefore labour to give you the thoughts and intention of Gods Spirit, so neer as we can. By the Wheels wee are to understand this visible world, with all things in it, the kingdomes of the earth, and the Church of God, and condition of all humane things, which are all in motion and uncertain; and that this is the sense of the Wheels may be gathered from the Prophet, in the 10th Chapter and 13th verse, where it's said, as for the wheels, it was cryed unto them in my hearing, *O wheel, O world*. Their name is the or this world: the word in the Hebrew is *Haggalgal*, and not the same with the usuall word for wheel, and it's both Substantively and distinctively used, and notes out this world in which we live, in which *Ezekiel* was; it's not *Galgal*, but *haggalgal*, which is demonstrative and distinguishing: *Psal 77. 18.* there is the same word, and it's not rendred in the wheel, but in the heaven, or in the round; that is, the ayre; and the Vulgar translates it, *The lightnings have shined in the world*: and so the *Septuagint*. Seeing it's evident, that by the wheels is meant the world and things therein; it's needfull to examine the fitnessse of this comparison, and so to see the wisdom of Gods Spirit in it.

For the *Greeks* do absolutely take *τεβχ* for the world, *Heins.* in *Iacob. 3. 6.*

1. The wheel or wheels are round, such is the form of the world, its called *orbis, globus*, from the roundnesse.

2. A wheel is moveable, and mutable, that part is on high is presently at the bottome, and that which is at the bottome is quickly again at the top: and this informs us in the mobility and mutability of all humane and mundane things, and is principally intended

by.

by this vision of the wheels: Kingdoms, Churches, Families, *voluntur, revolvuntur*, are daily wheel'd about, mov'd, changed, & never long permanent in any condition. The four great Monarchies, the *Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, Roman*, how were they kickt like Foot-balls, and tossed like Tennisballs from one to another, and at last devoured by each other? After that great rent made in the house of *David* by *Jeroboam*, what changes, what wars and famines were in the Kingdomes of *Judah* and *Israel*, you finde in the Books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles*? You may see the relation of these wheels in one Chapter: *1 King. 16.* you shall finde, that in twelve or thirteen yeers of *Asa's* reign, King of *Judah*, there was the death of *Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Tibni, Omri*, that were wretched Kings, and made fearfull stirs and murders in *Israel*: and beside, wicked *Ahab* in that time began his reign, and troubled all *Israel*. The Church, what a low ebb was it at in *Elijah's* dayes, when hee complains, Gods Covenant is forsaken, his Altars throwne down, his Prophets staine, himselfe left alone, and his life also fought for? *1 Kings 19. 14.* The Church now, when *Ezekiel* had this vision, was in captivity, without a Temple, Altar, Sacrifice; and the Church is never long in any settled condition. *Rev. 8. 1.* *There was silence in heaven about the space of halfe an houre*; under the ten fiery Persecutions, the Church had no rest, but in *Constantines* times it had a little, but pretently the *Arrian* heresie brake out, and did more mischief the Church then all the persecutions before. The Church is wheeled about from condition to condition, sometimes it's in *Egypt*, sometimes in the *Wildernes*; sometimes in *Canaan*, and sometimes in *Babylon*, it's *Noahs* Arke that rides upon rough waters, and is not like to take harbour before Christ comes.

So for families and persons, they are in a moveable condition: *Eccles. 1. 4.* *One generation passeth away, and another cometh; that goes, and a third hastens after them to the grave: 1 Cor. 4. 9* *We are made a spectacle to the world,* a Theatre, that is, we come into the world, and act here a little while upon the Stage of it, and presently we are gone; Kings, Princes and all conditions of men doe so; *Noah* and his Generations are gone, *David* and his. If wee come neerer our selves, the *Merovignian* family was driven out by *Pippin*, son of *Martel*, and that family by *Hugh Capet*; so that there have been three races of the royall line in *France*; the *Plan-*

*Etas parca-
tum peior avis
max laura pro-
geniem vitiosi-
orem, Horat.
Sat. 1.*

rageness race here is wholly gone, or lies in obscurity; great is the uncertainty, motion and mutation of the things in this world, the wheels are up and down, and not consistent; *Job* is very rich and poor in one day; *Haman* in great favour and under great displeasure in a wheele of time. There is a story very suitable to this vision of the wheels, and brought in by Expositors to give light unto it, which I may not omit; and it's of *Sesostrie* a King of *Egypt*, who had a golden Chariot, bedecked with many precious stones, and when hee rode in it, no meaner persons must draw it then foure Kings that he had conquered; one of the four cast his eye altogether upon the wheel, and being demanded the reason of it by *Sesostrie*, said, I see in this wheel the mutability of all conditions, that part of the wheel is neereft heaven, is by and by upon the earth, and contrary, that is upon the earth is presently againe neereft heaven. This wrought so upon *Sesostrie*, that hee thought his condition might change, and therefore freed those Kings from that servitude, and would not have his Chariot drawn any more by them. *Belisarius*, Generall of *Justinian* forces, overcame the *Persians* in the East, the *Vandals* in *Africa*, the *Goths* in *Italy*, and did extraordinary service, atlast had his eyes put out, his whole estate taken away, and forced to begge of passengers without the gates of *Rome*, *Da obolum Belisario, quem exulis virum, cecavit iuvudin*, O give one farthing to *Belisarius*, whom his own verue advanced, and others envie hath blinded. *Adonibozek*, who sate upon the top of this wheele, was soone brought under; he had seventy Kings with their thumbs and toes cut off, and put like dogs under his table to eat scraps, and himselfe was made acquainted with that condition. In the present affaires of *Ireland*, we may see the mystery of *Ezekiels* wheele: all things are running, moving, and working to a change. *Iam. 3. 6.* he calls it the wheel of nature, or rather of this Generation, shewing, that the present Generation is hastening out of the world.

3. Wheeles make in their motion a great noise and ratling, *Joel 2. 5.* Like the noise of Chariots on the tops of mountains; so the things in the world move not silently, but make a great stir and mighty noise, *Rev. 6. 1.* when the first seal was opened, and *Christ* rode abroad upon his white horse of the Gospel, conquering the Nations, there was as the noise of thunder, and stirs and tumults were

Baron.

1 Cor. 7. 31.

τὸν τοῦ Χοῦ
τῆς γενεᾶς.

were raised in Kingdomes; and mighty oppositions were made in the World: *Chap. 9.* when Christ shall judge the great Whore, and avenge the blood of the Saints; it will not be without noise: *ver. 6.* heard, as it were, the voyce of a great multitude, and as the voyce of many waters, & as the voyce of mighty thunders, saying, *Alleluia*; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; there is the voyce of the people like waters, a low and lesse noise; and there is the voyce of parliament and Armies a greater, a thundring voyce; the things now in motion in this Kingdome and others, make a great thundring in the world, as in former dayes, between the Houses of *Tork* and *Lancaster* were fought seventeen pitched fields, in which eight Kings and Princes perished; forty Dukes, Marqueses and Earles, 200000. of the people, besides Barons and Gentlemen; which things were not done without a great noise.

4. Wheeles are moved by some hand, and set on running, else they stir not: so this world is moved, acted and governed by divine vertue. Things are carried in this world like wheeles, up and down, backward and forwards, as if all were left at six and seven, *Psal. 113. 2.* and hurried up and down by some blinde chace or fortune, which we exclude, and only acknowledge all to be moved, ordered, and effected by divine providence; it's God that by his providence and the ministry of his Angels, that sets all the wheeles in the world in motion: a Sparrow falls not to the ground, nor a haire off our heads without his will.

5. By the motion of the wheel many works are done; the Pot-
ters of old made their vessels by the motion of the wheele; by it *Jer. 18. 3.*
the corn was ground, and justice was done: *Pro. 22. 26* He bringeth
the wheele over them; that notes the punishment of evill doers: it's
a metaphor from his bandmen, that in hot countreys did by the
help of a wheele breake the eares of corne, and so get it out; and *Isa. 28. 28.*
justice is the wheele that breaks men, and gets out the truth, and
separates the chaffe from the Wheat: in some place a wheele hath
been used to breake the bones of sinners. Hence *Tully* saith, That
an innocent life had nothing to doe with the wheele. So that by the
motion of the wheele much hath been done, and God by the ro-
tations and strange motions in the world, brings about great
works. *Dan. 9. 25.* the wals of *Jerusalem* should bee built in a
troublesome time. In the 8, 9. and 16. *Chap.* of the *Revelation*, men-
tion

tion is made of trumpets and vials, which note great stirr and changes in the world, and notable effects follow thereupon; We hope that the stirr of our time are the preparation to the most glorious worke of Antichrists ruining, our reforming, Christ reigning, and the Jewes raising; old things are passing away, and all things are becoming new; old Religion, viz. Popery, old Prelacy, old Service and Ceremonies are going downwards, and they that led into captivity, are themselves a leading into captivity, *Rev.* 13. 10.

Observ. The world and things in it, are not fit for us to fix our hearts upon. The world it selfe, and all in it, are of a wheeling nature, uncertaine, moveable, and running away; and the word *Galgal* a wheele, and the world, signifies also a more, chaffe, straw, any thing driven before the wind, and so it is used, *Isa.* 17. 13. *The galgal*, as a wheeling thing, before the whistle-wind; the margin renders it as a thistle, or thorne; the one shewes the Vanitie of the world, the other the vexation of it. Shall wee let out our hearts, to that runs from us like a rolling thing, and if we overtake it, runs into us like a thorne? they that will be rich, catch the world, pierce themselves thorow with many sorrowes, *1 Tim.* 6. 9, 10, and brake upon this wheele; Because it runs smoothly sometimes, men are taken with the motions of the world, but at length you shall finde it's motion rough, swift, ready to overthrow and break you all in peices; they are broken in *Ireland*, and wee are breaking here; now let the Apostles counsell be acceptable, *1 Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *Brothren the time is short; let them that have wives, bee as if they had none; let them that weepe, bee as if they wept not, and them that rejoyce, as if they rejoyced not, and they that buy, as if they possessed it not; and they that use the world, as not abusing it; and why all this? for the fashion, or shew, of this world passeth away; it acts otherwise then you expect, if you affect the world, wives, children, or any part of it, it will deceive you; you thinke to hold it, and it's but a shadow, no substance; and a shadow, a shew, going away; let us therefore not look at this wheel, but at him that moves the wheel; who is unchangeable, unmoveable, of infinite being, in comparison of whom the world is a drop, a little dust; let us with *David* say, *Whom have we in heaven but thee? & there is none in earth we desire in comparison of thee;* let us let goe our hold of the world, draw in our affections from*

magaly
praterit, deci-
pit..

from it, hopes after it, and look onely after that City, *Heb. 11. 10.*

Having given you the signification of the Wheels, the next thing premised, is the description of them; and now I come to the particular handling of the Wheels, where we shall meet with difficulties and excellencies.

VERS. 15, 16.

Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheele upon the earth by the living creatures, with his foure faces.

The appearance of the wheels, and their work was like unto the colour of a Berill: and they foure had one likenesse, and their appearance, and their work was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

IN these Verses they are described:

1. From their number, implied in the 15th, expressed in the 16th verse, *foure*.

2. The place where they were, and that is *the earth*.

3. Their colour: they were *like a Berill*.

4. Their likenesse between themselves; *they foure had one likenesse*.

5. Their form was, *as it were, a wheel in a wheel*.

Touching the first, *viz.* the number of the wheels, they were foure: mention is made of one in the 15th verse, but it's one with foure faces; not the faces of the four Cherubims, but of foure wheels: which wheels were so like, that they are said to be one wheel, he that saw one saw all: As in some picture of a Prince, when we have seen the same in divers places, or oft in the same, wee say, this is one and the same picture; so here, our Prophet saith he, saw all the wheels, but they were so like, that they might well be called one and the same: for the Prophet mentions in the 16th verse, wheels, and foure wheels, and one likenesse of them. Here by a figure called *Hypallage*, we may make the sense more easie thus; there appeared one face in the foure wheels, for, one wheel having foure faces. In the 10. Chapt. its out of all dispute that there were four wheels, *Verse 9. When I looked, behold the foure wheels by the Cherubims, one wheel by one Cherub, and another wheel by another Cherub.*

These

These wheels being four, represent to us the four parts of the world, Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern, that in them are great stirs and changes.

The next thing in this verse, is the place; *I saw one wheele upon the earth*: how could that be, when *Ezekiel* saw the vision in heaven?

Ans. This is a vision, and it appeared to him to be on the earth, not the true earth, but the earth in a vision: as in pictures, if a wheel, a Chariot, a City, be drawn, and presented to the eye, they are presented as being upon the earth.

Observ. 1. That all inferiour causes, wheels, instruments, agents whatsoever, are but as one wheel before the Lord. All things in the four quarters of the world were presented by God to the Prophet as one wheele; to us they are many, mighty, divers, contrary, infinite, but unto God they are otherwise, all the Armies, Parliaments, Kingdoms, Crowns, Agents in this world are but one cause, one wheel before the great God, they are a small thing to him. *Isa.* 40. 15, 6, 17 *Behold, the nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance: behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing; Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the best of it sufficient for a burnt offering: all nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him lesse then nothing, and vanity.*

2. That changes, stirs, and tumults, are here on the earth, not in heaven; the Prophet saw the wheels on earth, not in heaven; there be no wheelings, no turnings no troubles, no wars, no deaths, no diseases, no sinnes, no teares, no tears, no wicked men, no wicked thing, and so no changes; it's onely the prerogative of heaven, to say, *I am the Lord, I change not*, *Mal.* 3. 6. the world cannot say it. *Jam.* 1. 17. *With him is no variableness, or shadow of turning*; in God and heaven, there is nothing of the wheel, all is constant, immutable, but on earth its contrary, the things under the Sun are vanity, inconstancy, and change it self.

3. That all the inferiour agents and causes, are at the dispose of the superiour, of Angels; they have a great interest in the government of the world, the wheele is by the living creatures, at their feet, to move and turn it which way they please; if they will bespeak wars in the North, or South; if they will have the world in an uproare, its done; Angels are Gods hands and deputies, in the administration of all things here below, in the world.

God supports and subverts Kingdomes by them. *Dan. 10. Gabriel* tells *Daniel*, that he withstood the Prince of *Persia* 21. dayes, and his counsellours that sought to oppresse the people of God; and that hee would goe againe and fight with him; Kingdomes, and the affaires of them, yea. the quarters of the world, under God are ordered by Angels; and while Angelicall and divine protection are over Kingdomes, they prosper, but when God is provoked by the sins of a people, hee leaves the wheels of that Kingdome to men and devils, it runs to ruine. Then the princes and Potentates are deluded with strong delusions, grow tyrannicall, Idolatrous, false, hostile, &c. then the Kingdome grows weake, without spirit, counsell, strength, successe, and is infinitely intangled with difficulties, internall, externall; good counsels are slighted or opposed, opportunities of doing that Kingdome good not discerned, dangers not foreseen, or put off without due consideration. Blaphemers, traytors, oppressors and enemies to publike good are set up, divisions, seditions, domestique wars (if not forein) are made and maintained, and all things work strongly to ruine; it's observ'd by some, that there are more wars and desolations among Christians then others, and the reason is given, their sinnes are greater then others, and provoke God to take away his owne, and Angelicall protection, they leave the wheels of Kingdomes to men of corrupt minds, that move them wholly for private interests. This informs us of the honour and greatnesse of Angels that have the wheels of the world in their hands; wee looke upon them as great men, which have the command of some Province or country; what then are Angels, that have the rule of the whole world under God? Know, though their place be great, yet they are under command, and move not, but as they are moved by the Spirit of God: Let us also take heed, how we offend persons employed in such great services as they are.

4 That there are turnings and wheelings in all estates and parts of the world; the four living creatures noted the four parts of the world, and their agencies in them, and by them, now are presented the wheels; every living creature had a wheel by it, and this strongly implyes that there are wheelings, turnings, and changes in all parts; yea, the very same that are in one part are at one time or other in another part, the wheels are alike; Are
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wars;

Ecclef. 1.

wars, plagues, famine in one country? they are or will be in another. Do men die here? so in all parts: are men unfaithfull now? so they were of old; in *Dauids* dayes he said, *Men of high degree are a lie, and men of low degree vanity*, Psal, 62. 9. Are there unreasonable times here? such are abroad: are things carried by violence, oppression, injustice here? so they are elsewhere: are there designs, plots upon our kingdome and Church? so there are upon others; whatever befalls one State, befalls another, internally and externally; the wheels are the same, and move alike, though sometimes backward in one part of the world, and forward in another; there is no stability any where, but all things are in flux: in vain then doe men travell the world to finde certainty and content in it; in vaine doe wee tumble up and downe here and there, thinking to finde settlednesse, and something satisfactory: the world is like it self every where; goe East, West, and there is nothing but a wheel, and a wheel running. *Salomon* had tryed all conditions; he had wealth, wisdom, and opportunities, for he saith, *Who shall come after the King?* intimating, that none can travell farther then he did, to search and know the world and creatures, and all conditions; and what doth hee conclude, but *vanity of vanities?* that is, all is extreme and superlative vanity; and because men will not beleieve it, he doubles and trebles it, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*; take any place, or any thing in that place, its vanity, empty, fruitlesse, inconstant; so farr from satisfying, that it vexeth. Hence some have pictured *Salomon* upon an high hill, and all the world comming towards it, and climbing up, thinking to finde happinesse there, but he beats them down with a rod, saying, *It's not here, it's not here*. We must not look for stability, content, certainty among the wheels, but above them; now it's not time to look about and abroad, but to look above the world, and the wheels of it. Christ hath told us what's to bee had in this world; and its certain: *in the world*, saith hee, *you shall have tribulation*; and doe you not finde it? surely now it's eminent and pungent; and hee hath told us what's to bee had in himselfe: *in me you shall have peace*; if wee have tribulation in the world, wee may have peace in Christ.

V E R. 16

The appearance of the Wheels, and their Work, Was like unto the colour of a Berill: they four had one likeness, and their appearance, and their Work was as it were, the Wheele in the middle of a Wheele.

HERE wee have the colour, likenesse and form of the wheels to examine; first their colour (as for the worke, that is, the matter whereof they were made, or the artificiall form of them) *Their colour and work was like the Berill:* the Hebrew is, *as the ey,* or, *colour of Tarshish*; the word *Tarshish* in Scripture sometimes notes a City, Jon. 1. 3, sometimes a precious stone, Exo. 28. 20 it's the same word; and Interpreters observe there is a Sea also called *Esay 1. 16.* *Tharshish*, and it's like to be that where the City *Tarshish* was; for *Tarshish* that *Jonah* fled to, was a Sea Town. When our Prophet saith, *the colour was like the colour of Tarshish*, hee means not the city; the dispute is between the Sea or a Stone: some render it, *as the colour or vision of the Sea*; others, *as the colour of a precious stone*; and then the Quere growes, what stone, whether of a *Chrysolite*, a *Hyacinth*, a *Cryстал*, or a *Berill*: that here is meant a stone, is determined by infallible testimony, even Scripture it selfe: *Eze. 10. 9. The appearance of the Wheels was as the colour of a Tarshish stone*; and its well rendred by our interpreters a *Berill stone*; for neither the *Chrysolite* nor *Hyacinth* doe set out a Sea colour, the one being yellow, the others sky-colour, and the scope of the wheels and description of them, is to possesse us with the uncertainty and fluctuation of all things, which is livelily set out by the Sea; we are therefore to hold to the *Cryстал* or *Berill*; it's true, the *Cryстал* hath a watry colour, and its originall from the water, yet it doth not so fully set out the Sea colour as the *Berill*, which is a green stone, and they are counted best that have the Sea-greens. The best rendering of this word *Tarshish*, is the Sea *Berill*, because it hath altogether a Sea-colour, and mindes us of the Sea, by whose floating condition the uncertainty of all things is laid before us. *Rurens de gemmis. Beryllus Tabassus.*

Ob. 1. That the things here in this visible world are like unto the sea, uncertain & instable as the waters of the sea, they are never quiet, but
T 2 always

always rowling up&down from shoar to shoar, even in the greatest calm; these waters are in motion, and suddenly in a rage by vertue of the winds, which lift up the waves to heaven, and make all stormy and outrageous: there is no stability at all in these waters, and the world is as unstable as any Sea, as *Euripus* it selfe, that ebbs and flowes seven times a day: all creatures are in motion, and tending to corruption; all conditions are full of changes and inconstancy; who can tell how many inhabitants have been in some one street, in some one house, what wars have been brought in and sold out of some one shop? Men blessed and curse, love and hate in one day, in one hour: *Amnon* is sick for *Tamar* till his lust be satisfied, and then immediately hates her, *Ahasuerus* turns of *Vashti*, and entertains *Esther*: *Reuben*, *Gen. 49. 4.* unstable as water; *Pharaoh* on the Throne, anon in the bottome of the Sea: *Hezekiah* sound now, and heares by and by, *Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die*; *Jerusalem* besieged, and freed in one night; in youth we are altogether for pleasure, in manhood for credit, in age for riches, as if thick clay must be our *Viaticum* for heaven. We are fixt in nothing and nothing is firm to us; what certainty is there in honours, riches, pleasures? What constancy in health, wealth, worship? What *Seneca* said of a great city burnt, there's a dayes difference between a great city and none; the like may be said of most things and conditions.

*Una dies inter-
est inter maxi-
mam civitatem
& nullam.*

2. Deceitfull; the Sea hath a pleasant colour to allure, it's greenish, which is most suitable unto the senses; and yet it deceives many, if not most, it fills with fears, it impoverisheth many, shipwracks them, promiseth safety, and drowns thousands; oft it looks calm, and invites to come on, and being on, it becomes rough and ruinous. Hence the poet calls it, *fallax profundum*. A Merchant carrying Figs at Sea, suffered shipwracke, and sitting by the Sea shore, beholding it pleasant and calm, said, *Novi quid velis, seu vis*; you would have me again to venture through the deeps, but will trust you no more; he spake wittily, and did wisely: we should prove as wife for this world, trust it not, it's a deceitfull thing; it promiseth content, but that cluster never grew on the worlds thorns; the Devil ever disquiets whom he possesses, and so doth the world, it promises pleasure, but payes with smart, *Breve est quod delectat, æternum quod cruciat*, an hours pleasure &

eternall

eternall torture : *Dives* dainties now bite like a Serpent, and sting like a Cockatrice ; it promiseth much good, even to make them ; but it's otherwise ; *Achans* wedge of gold, purchased the stones beat out his braines ; *Judas* thirty pieces bought the halter strangled him ; *Sechem's* lust brought the sword upon him selfe and the city. It promises help in time of trouble ; it rather sinks then helps, like a man in the Sea with his pockets full of gold ; it hastens his drowning, it helps him not to the shoar, *Prov. 21 4. Riches profit not* : it tels us of continuance and abode with us, but here it guls us greatly ; the best thing the world hath, deals with us like false friends, they leave us in the lurch, and say as the ten Tribes to *Rehoboam*, Look to thine house David, *1 King. 12. 16.* Health saith, I must leave you, now looke to your selves ; Riches take wings and fly away, Eagles wings and fly with strength : Are not mens estates, libertties, honours, priviledges now upon the wing ? If *Prov. 23. Nebuchadnezzar* be in the palace among his Nobles, anon hee is in the Parke among the Beasts all night : as *Jacob* said of *Laban*. *Gen. 31. 7. Your father hath deceived mee, and changed my wages ten times* ; so may wee say of the world, it hath, it will deceive us, we look for honour, it will change our wages, and give us disgrace ; we look for riches, and it gives us poverty. *Adonijah* you may finde in one day upon the Throne, and at the horns of the Altar, hee will bee King, and have the lives of all in his hand, *1 Kin. 1. 5, 50.* and before night he runs to secure his owne life : it tels us of happinesse, successe, victory, life ; but *Zedekiah* sees *Jerusalem* taken, his sonnes slaine before his owne face, then his eyes being put out, he is bound in fetters, and carried to *Babylon* : Good *Josiah* goes forth to battell, and hee is slaine ; *Ahab* goes forth against the *Assrians*, victory is promised him, but hee is wounded and dies of his wounds : *Richard* the third, after his cruelties ; is slaine in *Bosworth field* ; and at the Battell of *Edge-Hill*, were not some taken, many wounded, and more slaine ? *Joab* pretended kindnesse to *Amasa*, but it proved cruelty, he kissed him, and killed him, *2 Sam. 20.* *Agag* is hewn in pieces like an Ox ; *Jezabel* eaten by Dogs, like a piece of carrion ; *Bajazet* carried in an Iron cage up and downe the world by great *Tomberlane*. Trust it not, it's like *Jael*, shee beganne with Milke and Butter, but ended with a Nayle and Hammer. An Emperour of *Turkey* married

married his daughter to a *Basha*, and after one nights pleasure, sent for his head the next morning.

They four had one likeness.

All the wheels were equall, none higher then other, greater, lesser, but an even and suitable proportion between them all, no difference was to be espied at all.

1. This informs us that there is no stability in any part of the world, but changes every where, and such in other parts as they finde with us. But of this before.

2. That Gods administration of the World, and all the wheels of it, is equall and harmonious; this is set out to us by the likeness of the wheels, although in the world and things of it there be disparities, inconstancies, strange motions and mutations; yet the wisdom and providence of God moves and turns the wheels, so that there is an admirable equability and harmony in all things; and if our eyes were opened, we should see and say, that no wheel could be moved better, to us the wheels seem all out of course, and to run with crooked motions, and to be hurried contrary wayes by men and devils; but all things are in their right course, and move that way God would have them; and what ever the appearance be, all things agree well among themselves. We oft condemn the sentence the Judge hath given, and blame a man for going about when hee may goe a neerer way; but when the reasons are made known, then we are satisfied.

*Nulla linea
posse melius di-
rigi, Rectissime
omnia inter se
conferunt.*

Their appearance and their worke was as it were a wheele in the midst of a wheele.

Here you have the forme of the wheelles, a wheele in a wheele. This is hard to explaine unto you. The words may be taken either *transverse*, or *comprehensive*.

*Ut duo circuli
ad rectos angu-
los se interse-
cantes.*

1. *Transverse*; the wheels were crosse-wise intangled in one another; as the lines or circles in a globe cut and crosse one another; they were so intangled, *Ut transversae esset complexio*, they were in one another crosse wise; and hereby is laid before us the severall crosse, intangled, and difficult motions of things in the world; all things doe not goe one way, nor evenly in our sight

and

and apprehension, but there are crosse motions, great intricate-
nesse, and knottinesse in the affaires of the world.

2. Comprehensive; a wheele in a wheele, not the gnave stock
in the midst of the wheele, to which the spokes are fasten'd, for
that hath not the forme of a wheele: but there was one wheele in
another; as the orbes of the heavens comprehend one another;
as in some Water-works, and Watches, there be wheeles one in
another: and then the meaning is, that there is a secret hidden
motion or wheele, that moves the wheeles which way soever
they run.

Observe first, that the motions of the world, and the kingdomes
are perplexed and crosse motions; like a wheele in a wheel, *Saul*
moved with all his strength to settle the kingdome upon his own
Son; but he met with a contrary motion; *David* is anointed to be
King, and the men of warre came to *David* to Hebron, to turn
the kingdome of *Saul* to him, 1 *Chron.* 11. 23. And so *Adonijah*
said to *Bathsheba*, the kingdome that was mine is turned about
and become my brothers; hee met with a crosse wheele and carri-
ed the kingdome from him, 1 *King.* 2. 15. How perplexed, intan-
gled, were the motions of the Jewish affaires; both in *Babylon* and
at *Jerusalem*, when the Prophet saw this vision? *Nebuchadnezzar's*
wheele was in theirs, and intrangled them much in both places.
What crosse motions were in *France*, when the King of *Navarre*,
Prince of *Conde*, the Admirall, and all that were of the Religion,
looked for peace, and met with a massacre? Are not there Ro-
mish, Spanish, French, and Popish wheels moving in our King-
dome, Armies, and Councils? Look at this instant upon the mo-
tions of this Kingdome, in Parliament, or out of it, and they are
exceeding intricate; Never was skain of silke or thread so knotty,
or involved, as the affaires of the kingdome and world are; never
bird so intrangled in the Lime-twigs or Nets, as things are at this
time.

2. The motions to mutations and ruines are very swift; things
move faster then we conceive to their ends; The *Jews* halted out
of *Egypt*, and destruction halted on the *Egyptians*. A wheele in
a wheele, notes intensification of motion; as *Elias* prayed in prayer,
1am. 5. 17: That is, he was intense; so a wheele in a wheele, inti-
mates intensification of the motion. All things make speed to their
own ruine.

The Papists
doe erect reg-
num in regno,
an ecclesiasti-
call monarchy
in the tempo-
rally exempt
from tempo-
rall jurisdiction,
onely sub-
ject ob pacem,
or beuam con-
suetudine, if sub-
ject at all; and
so they give
Monarchs a
broken right
in some things
but defeasible
in other things
by their spiri-
tuall Monar-
chie.

3. There

An interall
myltery in an
externall ap-
pearance or
dispensation,
the spirit of life
within keeps
the wheels in
motion.

Zonar.

3. There is a secret motion which carries on the wheels, and moves them that way they goe; there is a wheele in a wheele, and that sets the other a moving; as a loyng in a Watch sets all the wheelles agoing; some latent engine stirs the wheelles of the world: in some places you shall see the waters suddenly fly all about you; the cause of that motion is hidden; so in all the motions, turnes, and stirrs of the world; there is a secret wheele, divine providence, that sets on work and carries on. That was a great wheele and turn, when ten tribes at once fell from *Rehoboam*, and ran to *Jeroboam*; Politicians and Statesmen could see sedition, rebellion, and treason in that motion, the outward wheele was obvious, but the wheele in the wheele was not seen by every eye: Behold, *I will rend the Kingdom out of Solomons hands, and give ten tribes to thee*, 1 King. 11. 31. If there be divisions, ruines, plunderings in a Kingdome, there is a wheele in those wheelles, a providence that acts and orders. *Job 6. 5. Afflictions come not forth of the dust, nor trouble out of the ground, they come out of the wheele*, God turns that upon Kingdomes, and families; as *Micah 1. 12. Evil cometh down from the Lord to the gates of Jerusalem*; God hath a wheele in all the wheeling busines of the world. *Anastasia* the Emperour being informed of a conspiracy, against him, and the State, commanded *Justinian* and *Justinus*, with many others, to be executed, by a voice in the night he was bid to spare *Justinian* and *Justinus*, for they were to doe good service, and they both after ward were Emperours: the motion of the wheele in the wheele sav'd their lives, and advanc'd them to honour. At the Battell of *Keinton* was a wheele in a wheele, the wheele at first ran for the adverse party, but the wheele in the wheele turn'd it on our side: At *Brainsford* there was a wheele in a wheele. When the enemies plots have been their plagues, and their doings their undoings, the wheele in the wheele both moved and turn'd their own workes upon them *Psal. 9. 16.*

4 The motions of divine providence in the things of the world are beyond the reach of the ablest braines. Providence walks works so darkly, deeply, changeably, wheels about, so that mortals cannot tell what conclusions to make: when the issues of things are extant, we can see what the antecedent motions carried in their wombe, otherwise not, unless we have it by vision; as

here *Ezekiel* had ; or some extraordinary way. Providence hath such bouts and fetches, as puzzle the thoughts and hearts of the ablest and best : when the Children of *Israel* were at the borders of *Canaan*, they were carried back again to *Ezion-gabor*, Numb. 33. *Exod.* 13. 18. it is said, *God led them about through the way of the Wildernesse, by the red Sea* : and so providence leads businesses about, they goe backwards and forwards, so that we cannot make sense of Gods motions in the world ; As in Characters, till a man learn, be instructed in them, he can make no sense of them ; and men now of rare abilities, cannot tell what sense to make of the motions of the wheels. Mounſieur *Chastillon*, Admirall of *France*, at the match of *Charles* the 9th his Sister with the King of *Navar*, was invited with chiefe of the Protestants by the King to celebrate the marriage at *Paris*, and to confirm peace: the Protestants at *Rochel* advised him not to goe, but importunity of others prevailed with him, he went and was massacred for it. Although he was of great wisdom, he could not discern what way the wheels would move ; the wisest man is too weak to spell out the meaning of the wheels, and mysteries of providence : once before he had refused to come to Court at the Kings sending, who sent Mounſieur *Du Tors* his cousin to advertiſe him of important affaires he had to communicate : he suspecting, answered, the King means me no good, and tell him, there be no Count *Edmonds* in *France* : I will not suffer my head so easily to be cut off, as he did in *Flanders*. *Roderick* King of *Spain* to assure himself against the children and friends of *King Viriza*, whom he had deposed, dismounted all the strong holds, and disarm'd the people : this strengthened him against domestick enemies, not forein attempts, For the *Moors* invading him, shortly after overthrew him, and finding little resistance, in seven or eight months conquer'd almost all *Spain*. The *Britains* molested by the *Picts* & *Scots*, cald in the *Saxons*, who for some time served them to purpose, but in the end conquered them and their Countrey. These could not foresee what would be the issue of things ; the motions of providence are so secret and various, that it lyes not within the compasse of mans power to make certain conclusions therefrom.

5. There is a connexion of causes and things together in the world, *Hosea* 2. 21, 22. *I will heare the heavens, and they shall heare the*

the earth; that shall heare the corne, wine, and oyle, and they shall heare Iezreel; as in Architecture, there is a dependance and connexion.

Ver. 17.

When they went, they went upon their four sides, and they returned not when they went; and so on to the end of the 21.

IN these Verses we have two things :

1. We have the effect of the wheels, which is motion laid down in the 17, 19, 20, & 21. Verses.

And 2. The adjuncts of them, { 1. Height. } in the 18th verse.
which are two, { 2. Eyes. }

The commodiousefnes of their motion for all parts, and the form of it, are both in this 17th verse. The Hebrew is, In going, they went to their foure sides, to the four parts which were next to their sides, or through the foure parts, and so the sense is, they went to, into, or through the four parts of the world: if you read it according to our translation, *upon them*: the sense is, when the foure living creatures moved, the wheelles moved upon their sides: It's our phrase, when we ask one, which side went he of such a man? we answer, upon, or on his right or left side: but the better sense to me is, they went according to their foure sides. Look what side, what part of the world was appointed them, that the wheelles went to, and moved in.

And returned not] They came not backe, but went forward: There might be variety of motions, but no backe motions, no retrogradations, being once gone forth, they returned not.

The observation first is this: That in all parts, humane things move to their appointed period, and there is no returne of them being once there. *Pharaoh* and his Host came to their period at the bottome of the Sea, and never saw *Egypt* more. The Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, have taken up their lodging in the dust, and returne no more: What *David* said of the childe, *I shall go to it, it shall not return to me*; is a fit motto to all creatures, they must go to those are gone before, not they returne to them.

these : Cities, people, families, silver, gold, find linnen, they must see that corruption those saw in former dayes.

2. That inferiour causes move constantly in their motions, to doe the will of God : The wheeles turned not when they went, nothing could turne them backe ; nor the Angels in their administrations, but they goe on : We thinke it's the creature makes stops, lets, in the affaires of the world ; but it's Gods hand, his providence doth it, the wheeles, all inferiour causes proceed in their motions, till God check them, and cause a stand, *Esa. 43. 13. I Will worke, and who shall let it ?*

Ver. 18.

As for their Rings they were so high, that they were dreadfull, and their Rings were full of eyes, round about them foure.

19. *And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them ; And when the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up.*

20. *Whither soever the Spirit was to goe they went, thither was their Spirit to goe, and the wheels were lifted up over against them : for the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.*

21. *When those went, these went, and when those stood, these stood : and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them ; for the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.*

IN the 18th verse, we have the rings of the wheels described, from their highnesse, and eyenesse. They were so high, they caused terror, so full of eyes, they caused wonder : The Hebrew reading is somewhat different, it runs thus ; *And the rings of them, both heigh to them, and feare to them, or by reason of them ;* that is, the wheels were so high, that they bred terror, struck fear into the Prophet. The word *Rings* in the Hebrew is *Backs*, their backs were high, dreadfull ; that is, their Circumferences or Rings were so, of such breadth and altitude, (for there is no difference between those in rings and circles) that they caused feare to those looked upon them.

Now what is meant by this height and greatnes of the wheels, must be opened unto you ; and it's this : the motions of second causes and changes of things here in this world, are so great, so incomprehensible by man, that they produce feares and terrors to the sons of men ; Men are troubled, that they cannot fathome the depths, and measure the heighth and breadth of the wheels : when men see times and seasons changed, kingdomes dashed in pieces, the godly brought into bondage, the wicked advanced, truth persecuted, errors in credit, justice trodden down, and all things moving by contrary motions ; they stand amazed, and not able to reach the causes of things, to measure the wheels, and see into the exact motions of them, they become sensible of their own weaknesse, and say, O the heighth of the wheels ! O the shallownesse of our spirits !

Observ. 1. That the causes and motions, and changes in the world, are unknown to the sons of men ; the wheels are too high for them to measure ; man is so beetlelish and purblind, that the dim sight of his soul pierceth not into the secrets and knowledge of causes, it only comes at the out-side and extremities of things, the superficies of the wheel, but not the heighth and depth of it, not the true nature and causes of things ; so that admiration, opinion, not science is begotten in man ; this *Agrippa* knew, that writ a Book of the vanity of Sciences : and *Zanches* that writ a Tractat, *Quod nihil scitur* ; and *Socrates* was judged the learnedst man, for that he said, This I know, that I know nothing ; and above all these, the Apostle saith, *1 Cor.* 8. 2. *If any man thinke he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know* ; and elsewhere, *We see through a glasse darkely*, things are a riddle to us, we know not what to make of them. Look into the world, and what can we make of it ? the wheels in every quarter have such a heighth as none can reach ; second causes move so suddenly, as none can spy them out : Cast your eye upon *Physicall* wheels, and they are too high for Physicians to measure : what reason can they give of *Antipathies* ; or that some trees should have a venomous root on the one side, and a remedy on the other ? they meet with diseases and difficulties that are *Ludibria medicorum*, and must referre you to occult qualities : Cast your eye upon *Politickall* wheels, & there you will finde

finde such heights and depths, as neither *Achitophel* can measure, nor *Machiavil* can sound: Look at Theologicall wheels and motions, and there be such heights that none of the Prophets nor Apostles have been able to measure; I will give you an instance in two or three: *Jer. 12. 1, 2. Righteous art thou, O Lord, yet let me talk with thee of thy judgements: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? Jeremiah a great Prophet is puzzled at this height of the wheel; Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit, thou art neere in their mouth, and farre from their reins: Job is at a stand in this case, Cha. 12. 7. Wherefore do the wicked live, become old; yea, and are mighty in power? God puts Job to it in the 38, 39, 40, 41. Chap. So Asaph, Psal. 73, and Hab. 1. 3. were troubled at the prosperity of the wicked, and could not take the altitude of the wheels in their dayes; Nature nor Grace could do it. If Solomon knew not the way of an Eagle in the aire, of a Serpent upon the rock, of a Ship in the midst of the Sea, of a man with a maid, Prov. 30. 19. how shall we know the motions of the wheels in the world?*

2. That the consideration of the unsearchablenesse of Gods wayes, should beget feare and trembling in us; the wheels had a height and dreadfulness upon that height: When a man comes to the Sea shoar, beholds the vastnesse and strange motion of it, and findes he is puzzled, feare creeps upon him from the apprehension of the greatnesse and Majesty of God, who sits upon the floods, and commands the deeps: so here, when we thinke of the wheels, how high they are, that we cannot search out the cause of their motions, this way or that way, our soules should tremble at the Majesty of that God which sets such mighty wheels a work: *Psal. 36. 6. Thy judgements are a great deep; mens sins are a great deep, and Satans wayes are called a depth; but Gods judgements, his wayes in the wheels are the greatest deep of all, they are unsearchable.*

That Christian kingdoms are shaken in pieces with wars, when Heathen kingdoms are spared; that there is such unequall dispensation of the means of grace in the world: that the greatest part are without the knowledge of God and Christ to this day, that many able men are laid by, or cast into corners, where are
but

Rom. 11. 23.

but handfulls of people, and great towns where are multitudes, have no Ministers, or such as preach holinesse, and the power of godlinesse out of their parishes; that people are most hardened under the most powerfull means of grace; that there be such un-equall distributions of riches, talents of nature and grace; that precious young Ministers and others are taken away in a time of great need, when others that are vile and base are spared; that wicked Pirats prosper at Sea, when honest men are shipwrackt; that those have little or no means thrive, that those have the best who are barren: Gods working in sinfull actions, his sitting vessels for destruction, his leaving his ancient people the *Jewes* sixteen hundred yeares under a curse; *O the depth! how unsearchable are his wayes?*

The next thing in the Verse to be touched, is the eyes in these rings.

And the rings were full of eyes round about them four, or, on every side to them four.

Every wheel had eyes: they were *stellata oculis*, bedeckt with eyes, as the heaven with stars; there were eyes within, and eyes without, and not a few, but many; every ring, every wheel was full of eyes.

By eyes, we are to understand the active and infinite providence of God, which runs through all things, *2 Chron. 16. 9. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth*; that is, divine providence is active every where.

The Scripture by eyes, referring to God, intends: first, his knowledge and notice of things, *Pro. 15. 3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evill and the good*: secondly, his care, *Psa. 32. 15. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous*; that is, he careth for them: thirdly, his direction, *Psa. 32. 8. I will guide thee with mine eye*; and these eyes note out Gods inspection, care and ordering the wheels in all their motions, and that in all quarters. The rings were full of eyes, and whatever the thoughts of men were, they moved according to direction of divine providence.

Observ. 1. That how ever the wheels and motions of them be too high for men, and dreadfull unto them, yet they are not so to God; he sees into all the wheels, they have eyes on every side, God knows them thoroughly, their essences, qualities, operations;

we cannot pry into the state of Kingdoms, Councils, Armies, Cities; there be as secrets of States, so secrets of wheels in those States, which none know but God, and God knowes them perfectly: let wheels be never so great, terrible, move never such strange and crosse wayes; as Kings, Armies, Parliaments are great wheels, and have unknown motions; yet they are subject to the Lords eyes, he sees into all their secrets, and sees more in their motions then they themselves.

2. The motions of the wheels are considerable and judicious; they are not carried on blindly; how ever they seem to be carried, yet they are carried by reason and counsell; there be eyes in the wheels; when men do things rashly, injudiciously, we say; Have you no eyes in your heads? here be eyes in the rings, and they move not casually. Those motions in the world, that seem most confused, are composed and ordered motions: Are rich men made poor; honourable men base? are conquerers made captives? do servants ride, and Princes go on foot? are the wicked oppressors in the seats of justice? are the godly beneath, and the vile above? are the counsels of Jesuits, forainers, and desperate malignants entertained, and others rejected? are there civil wars in a Land, great plundering, spoyling of Ministers, Christians, Parliament men themselves? these things are not done without considerate and judicious motions of the wheels: *Alt. 4. 27, 28.* When *Herod, Pilate, Gentiles, Jews*, were gathered together against Christ, were not the motions then, (though inhumane, bloody, and murderous) considerate, and providentiall motions? The Text saith, *They did whatsoever the hand and counsell of the Lord determined before to be done*; it was no blind businesse, the wheels of it were full of eyes, and moved by the motions of heaven. Gods own eye, heart, and head were in it. And now, when the *Herods, Pilates, and Malignants* of the world do stir against Christ and his members, the wheels move considerately.

Non ceco impetu voluntur rotae.

3. The motions of the rings, wheels, and all second causes, are certain, arriving at the end appointed. They are full of eyes, which direct them to their journies end, so that they misse not the marke they aime at. What if many second causes be ignorant, blind, know not their own motions; yet if they have guides infallible to lead them, it's sufficient to conduct them to the intended end.

end. If a seeing dog can lead a blind begger from place to place, direct his motion to the desired end, shall not the eye of providence lead any, all second causes to their end? Providence is an unerring thing, & disappoints not God of his expectation. The Pilot carries a great ship from harbor to harbor, over the Seas, through the stormes, and fulfils the mind of the Master; and so Providence carries the great wheels up & down, to the very place appointed.

4. The least motions of the wheels are not without providence; some think that the great things in kingdoms and the world, are transacted by providence, but for the lesser, they passe in a casual manner, providence reaches them not; but the eyes were every where, the wheels were full of eyes; not a few eyes, here and there one, but in every part, that so mans minde might be freed from such sinister thoughts; as that there should be any motion of any wheel without the direction & influence of providence. God hath made the least and greatest creatures, and he causeth the least and greatest motions. Let us pitch our thoughts upon some lesser motion, the dispensation of a lot, the fall of a haire from the head, the preparations of the heart, the answer of the tongue, these are all of the Lord, and directed by providence; the earth loseth not a pile of grasse; the trees not a leafe; the water not a fish; the aire not a bird, without an ordinance of providence.

5. Providence orders the motion of the rings and wheels in all parts, all the world over; not one, two, or three wheels had eyes, but all foure had eyes round about them. God by his divine providence ordered things as well in *Babylon* as in *Sion*; Providence wrought in *Egypt*, and in the red Sea. As there are wheels in all parts of the world, in all Kingdomes of the earth; so there are eyes in all those wheels.

6. The works of God in disposing and governing second causes, are admirable, glorious, and beautifull works: The wheels were full of eyes, fitly disposed, wisely carried on, certainly attaining their ends. Could we see the eyes in the wheels, we should never fault the works of God in the world, but stand and admire their glory and beauty: when the heavens are veiled with clouds, we have fowle and discontented thoughts of the heavens themselves, but when the clouds are gone, that we can see the Stars, those eyes of heaven, then we admire their beauty and glory; and certainly,

*Providentia
tacet omnia,
ut unum ali-
quid, ita singu-
la, ut si illud
curaret uni-
cum, August.
in Confess:
And the
Schoolmen
say, that pro-
vidence is in
finita in omni-
bus, inf. ita
in singulis,*

certainly, it's a most glorious sight to see the heavens full of stars in a cleare night; and it's no lesse glorious to see the eyes in the wheels, and the choyce acts of providence in all their turnings and windings: *Cassin* saith, the world in all its parts is ruled like a paper with musick lines, and if we could see those lines, they would be as glorious as lines of gold.

7. The motions of the wheels are such as that they hold out a providence to all; there is something in the wheels that none can reach, and something that any may see, they are full of eyes, and the weakest may see one providence or other; if not all the eyes, yet some of them; there be mysteries in the wheels to exercise the greatest, and eyes to satisfie the weakest: As no man but sees the stars in the heaven at one time or other; so no man but may see the eyes in the wheels. That evill doth not over-run all, and the wicked devour the good, argues a providence. In one of the *Conanie* Islands, *Johannes Metellus* saith, there is a tree which drops water at every lease, and sufficeth the Inhabitants & their flocks, being a dry Island without water. *Mithridates*, when in his cradle, had his clothes consumed with lightning, and his body not toucht: A father and a son shipwrackt at sea, the son sail'd to shoar upon the back of his dead father. In these particulars and such like providence doth eminently appeare.

V E R S. 19.

And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up.

21. *When those went these went, when those stood these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them;*

Here we have:

1. The motion of the wheels farther commended unto us.
2. Their station.
3. The time of both.

THe motion was forwards, upwards and downwards: and for the time of their motion and station, it was when the creatures moved or stood: as the Cherubims moved, so moved the wheels

wheels, forward, upward, downward; and when they stood still, the wheels stood. The kind and manner of their motions, with their rest, depending on the living creatures; they moved equally by at their motion. What's meant by the lifting up of the wheels must be inquired; for Angels to be lifted up is not strange, they are heavenly creatures, and heaven is their habitation. But for the wheels to be lifted up, that is very strange, we must search out the sense; for into heaven they were not lifted. Expositors leave us in the dark, all except one that I have met with passe over this difficulty; and what I finde in that one is this: the lifting up of the Angels and the wheels, referre to the supreme cause, and seems to tell us, that inferiour and superiour causes, wheels and Angels are under the regiment of the first cause, and if we take the words actively, as *Adonatus* doth render them, viz. the living creatures in lifting up themselves from the earth, the wheels lift up themselves also; and that is, they looked up to heaven for direction and assistance, which may well be called a lifting up themselves, *Psalm. 121. Unto the Lord do I lift up my soul: that is, to thee do I look for counsel, comfort, strength.*

If we take the words passively, when the living creatures are lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up, then I will give you my thoughts what the sense may be, and it's this: the lifting up is not meant of lifting up to heaven, but to service; when God should more then in an ordinary way let out himselfe to the Angels, give them new light, new strength, & so lift them up to great service; then the wheels also were lifted up proportionably to do their parts; and the words in the Text invite me to conceive it to be the sense; because it's said, *The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels*, when God by his Spirit lifted up the Angels to great employments; then that the Spirit lifted up the wheels the second causes to more then ordinary service: and the word lifting up, notes service, a higher degree of it then before. *2 King. 19. 4. Lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left. Hezekiah sends to Iſaiah when Rabshakeh blasphemed, and Jerusalem was besieged, & saith, Iſaiah! thou art a Prophet, and hast more then an ordinary measure of the Spirit; lift up thy prayer, let it be extraordinary, such as may lift up the spirits of all to joyn with thee, higher then ever, such as may lift up Jerusalem out of misery.* So *Jehoiachin*, when he

was set up upon the throne to governe and to do great service; it's said, *his head was lifted up*, Jer. 52. and so in *Psal.* 10. 12. the lifting up of Gods hand notes doing of some great matter.

The next thing inquirable into, is the standing of the living creatures and the wheels, when the one stood, the other stood; do the Angels stand still at any time? they are active spirits, and alwayes in motion. Two things this standing implies:

1. A cessation from any service in hand, at the will and pleasure of God, if he would call off the Angels from their employments before they were finished. In this sense the Angels are said to stand, and so the second causes they used, although they were both employed in some other service: or,

2. When they had perfected any work in hand, then they were said to stand, not idle, but in expectation of a new Commission; like faithfull servants, when their work is done, present themselves before their Master, and demand their pleasure; so the Angels, and second causes, hearken what God will say more, and what is the next word and work to be done, they wait upon God for new instructions.

Observ. 1. The motions of this inferiour world, and the second causes in it, do depend upon higher causes, even heavenly motions, the ministry of Angels: The observation is plain from the words, *When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them.* If the Angels move, the wheels move also: they are great things the Angels have in their hands; the wheels of Nature, of States and Kingdomes, yea, of the Church it self.

2. Nothing in the world is casuall; many things seem so to us, but *in veritate rei* are not so; all things here below move at the motions of others; and that which is ordered by the motion of Angels or God himself, cannot be casuall. The wheels are moved by Angels, Angels, by God himself. God directs all; nothing happens, falls out amongst us, wherein the hand of God or Angels is not; things are not accidentall: if a thing could drop from the heavens, or be done on earth without God and his Angels, that were casuall and accidentall indeed. And because men see not the immediate or remote causes of things, who they be move the wheels on earth, therefore they attribute effects, events and accidentall things to fortune, chance, luck, to good, to bad

*Qui paratis
mensam for-
tuna, Hier.
Qui ponitis
mensam for-
tuna Vulg.*

*Abconditum
quid?*

dayes and hours, which proclaims mens ignorance and forgetful-
nesse of God, *Isai. 56. 11. Those that forget God, prepared a table
for that troop;* for Fortune, some read it; but those who know God,
acknowledge his eye and hand, seeing and ordering all.

Austin misses his way, and so eicaps the danger of death was in-
tended: another being in a despairing humour, seekes a knife, a
halter to undo himself, and findes a great treasure: a third hath
his ring drops off his finger into the Sea, and after findes it in the
bowels of a fish. God so directs all these accidentall things, that
there is nothing done but by a secret instinct and hint from him-
self, and in all such passages we should mind something of God.

3. That nothing can let the motion of the wheels when Angels
and Providence would have them stir. When the living creatures
moved, the wheels went presently; it's not in the power of second
causes, of men or devils, to hinder the work of God in the hand of
Angels. The King of *Persia* may withstand *Gabriel* 21. dayes to-
gether, *Dan. 10. 13.* but the wheels moved all the time; *Gabriel*
prevailed, and Gods work prospered in his hand: wicked men
make head against God, Providence, Angels, and think to stop
the wheels when they move not on their side, but all is in vain; if
a man should catch hold of a Chariot, running to stop or turn
the course of it, were it not folly or madnesse in him? and because
he would be the Chariots *remora*, that may prove his ruin: so here,
men and devils do ruine themselves in opposing the wheels, which
notwithstanding all oppositions, proceed & keep their course. And
let me tell you a riddle, Gods words go on through the hearts,
heads and hands of his greatest enemies, Providence fetches them
in, and makes them subservient to the work; they oyl the wheels,
although they know it not, and forward the work, though against
their wils. God in this kind makes use of kine and cart, men and
devils, yea, any creature to carry his Ark to its place.

4. That God doth sometimes raise the spirit of the creature to
more then an ordinary heighth, & inables it to unwonted service,
The living creatures & wheels were lifted up. So *Moses*, when cal-
led up to the mount, his spirit was raised much, else the service had
bin too hot and hard for him. *Ioshuah* was advanced when it was
told him, that there should not any man stand before him all the
dayes of his life. *Iosh. 1. 5.* *Jeremy* tells the *Jews*, that the *Chaldeans*

whom

whom they thought would depart, and not meddle with their City, he tells them, that though they had smitten the whole army of the *Chaldeans*, and that there remained but wounded men, yet they should rise up every man in his Tent, and burn the City with fire, *Ier. 37. 10.* When men are wounded, thrust thorow, as the Hebrew is, they can have but little strength; how should they be able to do it? God would lift them up to that service, as *David* when he grappled with the Bear and Lion, incountred with *Goliath*, had his spirit lifted up to a great height. Hence that in *Zachary 12. 8.* *He that is feeble among you at that day, shall be as David*, that is, such a warrior as *David*, who, though a young stripling, slew a Bear, a Lion, and *Goliath*; and the house of *David* shall be as God, and as the Angel of the Lord. The godly, though weak, yet shall be lifted up to divine and Angelicall strength; this was made good in the time of the *Maccabees*, when the people of God were weak, *Antiochus* fierce and vile, then God raised up the spirit of *Judas*, *Jonathan*, and *Simeon*, to do extraordinary things: this was also made good in the time of the Apostles: what great things did they do; and *Paul* saith, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*; what bitter things did they & others suffer? and it was not common strength, but speciall influence, *Phil. 1.* *To you it is given, not only to believe, but also to suffer*: *Blandina's* spirit was heightned above the malice and torments of men, for having animated her children to suffer, and sent them as conquerors to Christ their King, she comes forth to suffer before the tormentors cheerfully, as called to supper with Christ her husband, as one comes to a marriage supper, & after stripes, tearing with wild beasts, burnings, putting into a net, and tossings by a Bull, being without sense of torment by reason of her faith and conference she had with Christ, at last they killed her with the sword; and the enemies confessed, they never saw such a woman, suffering such things so courageously and constantly. As sometimes God suspends the ordinary operation of the creature, the Lions mouths are shut, they touch not *Daniel*; the fire burns not the three children: so, sometimes he lifts up and extends the operation and strength of the creature to an extraordinary height; the winds, what vertue doth God put into them? how doth he raise them? what terrible work do they make at Sea and Land,

Land, tear Navies in pieces sink them in the deeps, and toss Ships out of the water upon the dry Land? Ravens fed *Elijah* morning & evening, he goes in the strength of a cake and a cruze of water forty dayes, *1 King. 19.* God hath lifted up many in these dayes to do more then ordinary service, *Ezra. 1. 5.* God had raised their spirits to go up to build the house of the Lord, so *Hag. 1. 14.*

5. That God at his pleasure puts stands to the motions of the second causes, the Angels stood, and the wheels stood, and this was the over-ruling hand of God, that can stop the course of nature, any wheels or agents whatsoever. *Josh. 10. 12, 13.* God staid the course of the Sunne and Moon, and made them stand still the space of a whole day; and hereupon some gather, that the ebbings and flowings of all Seas ceased. In *Hezekiahs* days the Sun went backward ten degrees; God stopp the course of the waters, and made them as steady as walls and mountains when the *Israelites* were to go through the red Sea; Doth not he shut up the wombs of those are likely enough to be pregnant, & prevent generation? did not he take of the wheels of *Pharaohs* Chariot? God can put a stand to the greatest wheels, *1 King. 12. 21.* when an army of 180000. chosen men was brought into the field, to fight and fetch back the kingdom that was wheeled over to *Jeroboam*; see what a stand God put to that army, *vers. 24.* *Ye shall not go against your brethren, return every man to his habitation;* they did so, & presently that mighty army was disarmed. The buying and Impropriations, a work of great and good concernment, God put a stand to it. The undertaking for *Ireland* hath the wheel stopp, not taken off; The motion of the wheels to the Isle of *Providence* are stayed by the eye of providence; Are there not stands in our consultations, and doth not God oft take wisdom from the wise, and understanding from the prudent? are there not stands in our Military affaires? the mighty men do not alwayes finde their armes. Hath not God oft put a stand to the enterprise of our adversaries? It's the Lord that hath hedged up their way with thorns, and walled a wall that they have not found their paths; and God hath hedged up our wayes, that we have not found our paths to a full and thorough reformation. This great wheel hath great stops; the children are come to the birth, but there is a strength to bring forth: neither doth Gods work cease, whe

he makes stops: A man who is printing a Book, defers the Edition, because he will make an Addition; If it be delayed it is enlarged; and that's no losse; stops of providence in the wheels of the world are Gods *Parabases*, and while they are writing, the work goes on.

VER. 20.

Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go, and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

IN this Verse is laid before us the procreant cause of the wheels motion; and that is the spirit, which is the first and highest agent, and moves both superiour and inferiour causes. This spirit is set out emphatically; *the spirit*, or, *that spirit*; not the spirit of the Angels, but the eternall Spirit of God which was in the Angels, or the living creatures, that Spirit was in the wheels, and with what motion it moved the living creatures, with the same it moved the wheels: this is the scope to shew that the four living creatures and four wheels were moved by the same Spirit of God.

Touching this Spirit, I spake in the 12th Verse, where I also shewed you how the Spirit is said to go, and move from place to place.

This answers a secret objection: How could the wheels move at the motion of the living creatures? they are dead and senseless things, without any motive vertue in them. And this objection is fully answered in these words: the Spirit of life was in the wheels.

That is rendered, *the Spirit of the living creatures*, is in the Hebrew, *Spiritus vitæ*, the Spirit of life, the enlivening, quickning spirit, the lively active spirit; or the spirit of the living creatures, and per enallagen numeri by a change of the singular number into the plural, the spirit of the living creatures, and so the sense runs, that Spirit was in them, the same was in the wheels.

Object. If the same Spirit be in the wheels, are not they also living creatures, having the same spirit and motion?

Ans. If I should say they were moved, as if they had the Spi-

הרוח

רוח החיה
spiritus vita-
lis, or spiritus
animalis.

rit in them, this might help the difficulty, but doth not satisfie the Text; which saith the Spirit, was in the wheels: therefore know, that as the living God is in every thing, moving and acting them according to their severall natures, and yet doth not make all to be living creatures; so the Spirit of God was in these wheels, not animating, inliv'ning, but moving them to those services were commanded and appointed.

Observ. 1. That second causes move not of themselves, neither superior, nor inferior; not the wheels which are weaker here beneath, nor the Angels which are stronger and above, they move not, but at the motion of the Spirit; whither that was to go they went: Earth, Water, Winds, Beasts, Fowles, Men, their Councils, Warres, Peace, Trades, they all move *ad motum Spiritus*, it's the Spirit of God that moves all the wheels. All motions, all which are subject to the Spirit, and regulated by it. When the Devill accused, tempted, smote *Job*, he and all his motions were ordered by a higher power; So when the Devils entred into the swine they did what, and moved whither the Spirit would have them to do, to goe.

2. No creatures, wheels, nor Angels, no causes inferior or superior, can go otherwise, or act otherwise, then the Spirit would have them. Whither the Spirit went, thither they went, they moved not before the Spirit moved them; & when they moved, they moved that way the Spirit moved: Devils and wicked men cannot be any where but where the Spirit would have them to be, nor do any thing but what the Spirit would have done. *Pilate* with the *Gentiles* & people of *Israel*, were gathered together to do whatsoever the hand & counsel of God had determined before to be done, *Act. 4. 28.* For the Spirit is the suprem, most potent, & efficacious agent, overruling all motions, so that no creature can move any other way then it doth. *Prov. 21. 1.* The heart of the King is in the hand of the Lord, he turneth it whithersoever he wil. Kings cannot turn thithersoever they wil; ill Counsellors cannot draw them whithersoever they will, but they move which way the Spirit and providence of God will have them move. This turning or inclination saith *Luther*, is that strong operation of God which the King cannot shun or change. If Kings hearts go after out-landish women as *Solomons*; if carried to ill Counsellors, as *Rehoboams*; if to the

* Est actusissima illa operatio Dei quam mutare & mutare non possit. Sive finit, sive inclinet Deus, ipsum finere vel inclinare, non sit nisi volente & operante Deo; quid voluntas regis non potest effugere actionem Dei omnipotentis, quia rapitur omnium voluntas, ut velit & faciat, sive sit bona, sive simala.

latry, as *Jeroboams*; if to root out the godly and godlines it self, as *Abahs*; if to ruine their Kingdom, as *Abaz's* did; if to shed innocent blood, as *Manasses* did; the hearts of Kings are in the hands of the Lord, he turns them whithersoever he. will, in all those motions he acts in just judgement, not changing their wils, but making use of them to bring about his own designs.

3. The motions of the wheels are not unseasonable; when the living creatures went, then the wheels went, and what is the cause of their motion; the Spirit was in the wheels, and the Spirit was in the living creatures: if we condemn their motions and changes as untimely, we shall question and condemn the work and wisdom of the Spirit, which is infinitely wise and incontrollable in all its operations: men, even the best of them, are apt to fault the motions of the wheels, and to censure the acts of Providence as unseasonable; the counsell is not good at this time that *Achitophel* hath given, 2 *Sam.* 17. 7. Did the Spirit then move that wheel seasonably? yes, because the counsell, though not good for *David*, whose destruction it tended unto, yet it was good for the ruine of *Achitophel* and *Absolom*, and that was the intent of the Spirit in moving that wheel, *Ver.* 14. *The Lord hath appointed to defeat the good counsel of Achitophel, to the intent to bring evil upon Absolom, & Achitophel too.* What? civil wars in *England*, when *Ireland* lies a bleeding to death; when such a time to vindicate the *Palatinate*, and wrongs sustained at the hands of the Emperor; when such a time to help the Protestants in *France*; what, now to have King & Parliament divided? now to be imbroyled in a bloody, civil war, is not this most unseasonable? Stay thy thoughts and censures, O vain man; The Spirit of God is a Spirit of wisdom, and knowes when it is best to move the wheels. No Musician tunes it better then the Spirit of God, had these changes and motions bin, and our enemies abroad at peace, they would have taken the advantage of our divisions and wars, and made a prey of us; seeing therefore we must be let blood, or die, this great & wise Physician, the Spirit in the wheels hath done it seasonably: Are great towns plundered? Counties disturbed? Families impoverished? or Churches dissolved? the righteous smitten, the wicked spared? and kingdoms shaken into pieces? these motions, changes, are not unseasonable; they are all in their appointed time: this war is in its

appointed time, *Ezra* 4. 17. *There is mention of peace, and at such time, the time is observed; so now, the war, and at such a time, such a time as is appointed, as the Spirit of God judges fittest, Eccl. 3. 8. There is a time of war and a time of peace, ver. 3. a time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up; the Spirit knowes and observes those times punctually, and moves not a wheel but in its due time, and so the motions of all are beautifull in Gods eye, and should be free from mans blame; man knowes not his time, Eccles. 9. 12. But it's not so with the Spirit, it knows times and seasons, and never misses to move the wheels in their due season. The travell of a woman at nine moneths is not more seasonable then the turning of the wheels at at what time the Spirit pleaseth: If the tree, *Psal. 1. bring forth her fruit in due season, and the Spirit moves the wheels in due season, none are too early, none too late.**

4. The consent w^h is between heaven and earth; the Angels and wheels is from the Spirit of God which moves in them. When the living creatures went the wheels went, when they stood, these stood, when they were lifted up, these were lifted up; and what's the ground of this harmony? the Spirit was in them, that acted them, & ordered their motions; having the same Spirit, they went the same way, and did the same work without difference, without contentions; The Spirit of God is a Spirit of union, where that moves it moves not to discord, but to minde the same things, and to move the same wayes: *Numb. 11. 16, 17. When the same Spirit which was upon Moses was put upon the seventy Elders, then they judged as he judged, then they moved the same way, & did bear the burthen of the people together with Moses and ver. 25. then they prophesied, and it being told Moses, that Eldad & Medad prophesied, he will make no breach upon it, but finding the same Spirit in them that was in himself, said, Would God all the people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them, v. 29. he knew the same Spirit would move them the same way that he went: So Elisha, when he had received the Spirit of God which Elijah had, he moved his way, carried on that work he did: 2 King. 2. Wicked Balaam, when acted by Gods Spirit, consents with the true Prophets, and prophesieth the happinesse of Israel, and cannot curse the people of God, though tempted and hired to it, *Numb. 24.**

5. That

5. That the wheels readily do the will of God, and follow the Spirit, where ever it goes, thither their spirit was to go, the Spirit was in the motion : and therefore they are said to have eyes, and the Spirit in them, and to move at the motion of the Spirit; wheels have roundnesse, and so readinesse to move, but not Gods way, full of eyes they are, and look at Gods ends ; but if they had not the Spirit in them, they would not move that way, or if they did, it would not be without dispute, sloth, murmuring ; it's the Spirit makes them move the right way, and readily in that way ; where the Spirit is in any, there the motion is right and ready : Ayre, Sea, Land, have no vigour in them, but what the Spirit puts in, and they move as the Spirit will have them : *Psal. 148. 8. Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind, fulfilling his word, they all do the will of God, fulfill his word readily ; they have the vigour of Gods Spirit in them : Gen. 1. 2. The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, not an Angel, not the wind, but the eternal Spirit of God, and so they move by vertue of the Spirit into their place, the Spirit createth, cherisheth and sustains all things ; and they are all obedient to the call of the Spirit, and tread in the paths of it, all creatures move after the Spirit, Psal. 104. 30. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit ; they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth ;* Heib, Plants, Trees, Beasts. Fowls, all living creatures are created and formed by the Spirit, and move according to those principles, and instincts the Spirit puts into them, their motions and services are no other then what the Spirit leads them unto, and those motions they readily performe.

6. The wheels and second causes do go on and move incessantly, unweariably, in the way the Spirit puts them, they went whither the Spirit went ; neither the Spirit nor the wheels do faint or fail in their motions.

7. The Spirit of God is a living and lively Spirit, a Spirit of liveliness, it's the Spirit of the living God, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* And the living God cannot have a dead and livelesse spirit ; it's a Spirit of life, *Rom. 8. 2. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.* The Spirit hath life in it self, it gives life to all, *Job 33. 4. The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life,* all life comes from this Fountain and Author of life ; Eve was called the mother of all living, that is, of all men and women ;

Spiritus.

but the Spirit is the father of all living, men, women, and other creatures. It's the Spirit that maintains life, *Act. 17. 28. Job. 27. 3. All the while my breath is in me, the Spirit is in my nostrils*, the Spirit of God is in that breath, and maintains life by it. The Spirit quickens and improves life, *2 Cor. 3. 6*. The Spirit quickens, not only makes life, but makes lively : it's the Spirit that quickeneth, not only from death, but from deadnes & dulnes: *Cant. 4. 16. Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof might flow out* : the meaning is, Let the Spirit breath in the Ordinances, and quicken up the Saints, and then they will be lively, active and fragrant as spicery. *The Spirit rested upon Christ, Isa. 11. and he was quick in understanding, and quick in operation : Act. 10. 38. he was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power, and went about doing good*, the Spirit made them lively : and so it's the work of the Spirit that makes the Saints lively and active, it's the Spirit that leads unto life.

8. It's the Spirit of God which worketh all in all things, the Spirit is in the wheels, and works in them and by them : we speak not now of the choyce operations of the Spirit in the Elect, but the common operations of the Spirit in all creatures. There be admirable qualities, instincts and excellent operations in Plants, Birds, Beasts: what ever they be, it's the Spirit that wrought them there, the Spirit is in the wheels, the instincts of the Bees and Birds to build so curiously : in the Locusts, to go out by bands : in the Ants, to gather their meat in Summer : in the Connies, to make their houses in the rocks : in the Spider, to weave so fine a web, is put in by the Spirit of God, *1 Sam. 10. 6. The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesie, and be turned into another man* : that is, thou shalt have gifts fit for government : the Spirit will instruct and inable thee to rule this people.

The consideration of this point should be a stay to our spirits, which way soever the wheels move, the Spirit of God is in them: when we look abroad, behold the crosse and confused motions of the world, our hearts repine, murmure, sink in us, shift, and we are ready to start aside out of our places to unwarrantable practices ; but let us remember the Spirit of God is in the wheels, and stirs them at its own pleasure : If *Shimei* curse, *David* sees God in that motion, and saith, *Let him alone, God hath bid him* : so *Job*, when

when all was taken away by the *Chaldeans, Sabeans*, he was so far from impatience, that he falls a praising and blessing God : there is no just ground of impatience in the world, it's the Spirit in the wheels which moves them.

It should also help our faith, because in all designs of men, motions of the wheels, God hath his designe going on : the Spirit is in the wheels, which is an invisible, but a strong agent, and doth invisible work, carrie on the Lords designe, how ever the motions of the wheels seem to us : let the wheel be intangled, run, stand still, or move contrary wayes, yet Gods work goes on, and our faith should get up.

VER. 22, &c.

And the likensse of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature, was as the colour of terrible Crysell stretched forth over their heads above.

23. *And under the firmament were their wings, streight the one towards the other : every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side their bodies.*

24. *And when they went, I heard the noyse of their wings, like the noyse of great waters : as the voyce of the Almighty, the voyce of speech, as the noyse of an host : when they stood, they let down their wings.*

25. *And there was a voyce from the firmament, that was over their heads when they stood, and had let down their wings.*

IN these Verses we have the fourth Vision, or fourth part of the generall Vision, which is concerning the firmament. This Vision, as formerly hath been shewn, holds forth unto us the glory of God : and of that glory which lies in his providence and government of the world, we have spoken in the precedent parts of this Vision : there is yet more, and higher glory to be spoken of, and that is the glory of God, in the person of Christ. This Vision of the firmament, is preparatory to the Vision of Christ upon the Throne : it's described,

1. From the place of it : *it was upon the heads of the living creatures.*

2. From

2. From the colour : *it was like Crystal, and terrible Crystal.*

3. From the noyse came thence ; *vers. 25.*

In the 23. and 24. Verses, we have a renewed and intermingled description of the living creatures from their wings, the situation, the number, the office, and noyse of them.

רָחִיב *diffen-*
dere, expande-
re.

To begin with the *Firmament* ; the Hebrew word is *Rachib* from a word signifies to draw out and make thin, as metals are, and wool, to stretch out, as Curtains and Tents are, *Isa. 40. 22.* whence heaven is called *expansum*, because it is stretched out over the whole earth ; the Greeks call it *στρωμα* because of the firmnesse and permanency ; hereupon we call it the firmament, not from the hardness or solidity, as if it were like Iron, or Stone, but from the firmness of it, that it hath endured many thousand yeeres and is not melted by its motion, nor at all changed : it's taken sometimes for the ayre, sometimes for the clouds, and sometimes for heaven it self, and so we may take it here ; even the starry firmament.

This firmament was over the heads of the living creatures, the wheels and Angels were under it, and it was between the Lord Christ and these creatures, and did the office of that pair of wings which did cover the faces of the Seraphims in *Isa. 6. 2.* great was the glory of Christ, and through this vail of the firmament presented to them.

The colour and likeness of it was as the terrible crystal.

We must a little explain these words, it was the likeness of the firmament, not the firmament it self. The Hebr. words runs thus *the ice, the terrible, or the terrible ice*, קָרָח is ice, water hardened by cold, whence Crystal hath its birth ; for, though ice be not Crystal, yet Crystal is from ice ; when ice is hardened into the nature of a stone, it becomes crystal ; more degrees of coldness, hardness, and cleerness, give ice the denomination of Crystal and the name Crystal imports so much, that is, water by cold contracted into ice, and *Pliny* saith, the birth of it is from ice, vehemently frozen ; and so you see the original of Crystal.

The Epithet here added, *terrible*, hath some difficulty in it, the heaven, a *visional firmament*, should be terrible, seems strange : terrible-ness ariseth from newness, greatness, or the glory of a thing

הַקָּרָח
הַנּוֹדָח

אֲרָמִים וְאֲנָשִׁים
לְהַמְדִּים וְלְהַמְדִּים
לְהַמְדִּים וְלְהַמְדִּים
לְהַמְדִּים וְלְהַמְדִּים

N u, b i, 1. 37.
C. 2.

Things new and strange, do cause fear: as when the earth opened, and swallowed up *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, there was great feare, it was a terrible thing; and this is called a new thing, *Numb. 16. 30. If the Lord make a new thing*: so when new sights are seen in the heavens, they cause astonishment to the beholders: as comets, the standing of the Sun, and the like.

2. Things great are dreadful; great waters, great mountains, great armies, *Deut. 1. 19.* he calls the Wildernesse a great and terrible Wildernesse, *Joel 2. 11. the day of the Lord is great and terrible*: and so, *the Lord great and terrible*, *Nehem. 4. 14.* from the greatnesse of it therefore might this Chry stal be terrible.

3. The glory of it, that might make it terrible; for glorious things are so, lightning is glorious and dreadfull: when Gods glory appeared in the mount, it was terrible unto *Moses*, and made him to quake, *Heb. 12. 21.* At *Pauls* conversion there was a glorious light, which stroke feare into all were with him, *Act. 9.* And this Chry stalline firmament was full of glory: Chry stal is a cleer thing, receives the light, so as to affect the eyes much, in like manner this firmament had a great cleernesse, and transparency, being the foot-stool of Christ sitting upon the Throne.

The *Septuag.* sometimes translate the Hebrew word for terrible, *Suppendancum*
glorious, *Deut. 10. 21. Who hath done for thee these great and terrible things?* great and glorious things, say they; so *Sa. 64. ver. 3. ubi sit: scaturis in throno. uolens.*

Thou diddest terrible things; they render it glorious things; for they are terrible: and here from the gloriouinesse of this Chry stal or Chry stalline visional firmament, it may be called terrible; and this I conceive to be the true cause of its terriblenesse, it was so glorious, that none could behold it without being dazled, astonished and put into a trembling.

Observ. 1. That all creatures are under Christ, even Angels themselves, they and the wheels are under the firmament where Christ is, he walks above; his feet are where creatures heads are, all are subject to the power of Christ, and he sits above, and he rules them, and over rules their actions. Angels and all wheels stoop to him; the Prophet saw the wheel on the earth, the Angels under the firmament, but Christ was above, *1 Cor. 15. 27.* All things are put under him, all Angels, all men, all devils; God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, *Phil. 2. 9.*

2 That

Tam vehementer nititur ut ordinatum aspiciendi offret, P. A. D. uincitatem tuam. lan. prole ferbat. M. le.

Rev. 21. 1.

2. That heavenly things are pure and glorious, and hold forth the glory of God, they have the cleernesse, splendor, and lively colour of the Crystill. The higher we ascend, the more purity, beauty and glory; there is more in the ayre then in the earth & waters; more in the Sun, more in the stars and firmament, then in the inferiour things: Gods glory is every where, the earth is full of it; If we look downwards, we may see it, but if we look upwards, we shall see more excellency and glory. How much glory is in the Sun? who can tell how many wonderfull things it hath in it? and so the firmament, *Psa. 19. 1. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work,* The out-spread firmament, that is so vast, so transparent, so beset with stars, that darts down such sweet influences, it holds forth Gods glory exceedingly; the glory of his wisdom, power, goodnesse; There is much of Gods glory seen in it: *Job 37. 18. The sky or firmament is compared to a looking-glasse; not because you may see severall species of things, as we see severall faces in the water, and birds in the ayre, but chiefly, because in it we see so much of the glory of God, even most of his attributes, we should be oft looking in this glasse, and observe the glory of God.*

*Incantantur sa-
crum quoddam
honorum.*

Jud. 6.

Jud. 13.

*Sensibile excel-
lens destrui:
sensorium.*

3. That the things above are dreadfully glorious, so glorious that our weak eyes cannot behold; the glory of the firmament was as the terrible Crystill, such as caused dread in a Prophet: what eye can look upon the Sun in its glory and strength? could we see an Angel in its glory, it would terribly fright us; when Angels vail'd up their glory in humane shapes, it made great Worthies of God to quake, as *Gideon, Manoah*, and others: glorious objects work strongly upon our spirits, and quickly scatter them. And if the glory of creatures be such, what is the glory of God himself? *1 Tim. 6. 16. God dwells in the light, which no man can approach unto:* it's such exceeding glorious light, that no created eye can endure: that light or glory is Gods habitation, and so glorious a one it is, that we cannot look upon it. *Act. 22. 11. Paul could not behold that glorious light shine about him.* The earth, heavens and world, which are Gods house, we may behold, but his glory, which is himself, his innermost roome, we may not, we cannot eye: this light is darknesse unto us, there is so much brightnesse in it, that it will put out our eyes.

and whether this glory be accessible by the Saints or Angels, may be disputable; because God is invisible, and his glory inaccessible, and besides, the Angels, they had wings to cover their faces, *Isa. 6.* And here they are presented to *Ezekiel* under the firmament, with that upon their heads, which shews, that they, and all creatures are distanced from God, and capable of seeing his glory onely in that way, he thinks good to propound it. That in *Matth. 18. 10.* seems to speak the contrary, where it's said, that in heaven, their Angels doe alwayes behold the face of my Father; it's true, they are in the speciall presence of God, have sweet and satisfactory communion with God, stand ready to doe his will; but God hath no face in heaven, and whether they see his essentiall glory, I leave to farther inquiry.

4. That all things here below are exposed to the eye and view of Christ, the firmament is so cleere that Christ sees through it. It's the window of heaven, and through it he lookes into the world; it's a molten looking glasse; and as wee may see Gods attributes and glory in it, so Christ sees our shapes, thoughts, distempers and motions: he saw *Saul* when he got the Letters to *Damascus*, to persecute the Saints; the Lord Christ saw him, and knew the bloudiness of his mind, and said unto him, *Saul, Saul*, *Acts 9.* many are Atheisticall, and say in their hearts, as hee in *Job 22. 13.* *How doth God know? can he judge through the dark clouds?* they do evill in the dark, and say, who seeth us? and who knoweth us? there is one in the heavens that seeth through the clouds, and darknesse it self, they are as the Sun and Firmament to him; darknesse is no darknesse, the firmament is as light it self; all things doe in Armies, Councils, Markets, Shops, Families, Closets, Beds, Hearts, are naked and open to the eyes of him, with whom wee have to doe, *Heb. 4. 13.*

I come now to the 23. Verse, where the glory of Christ is set out from his Ministers, or Officers; and they are the living creatures.

V E R. 23.

And under the firmament were their wings, straight the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side their bodies.

I Have spoken before of the wings; yet somewhat I shall adde; four wings they had, and more we may not give them, though it may seem in this Verse they had more: for it's said, *their wings were straight*, that is, stretcht out, and then, that they had two on this side, and two on that side; but the meaning is, when they did flie, those wings that did cover upward, were stretcht out, and the other did still cover their bodies or feet.

The scope of the verse is, to shew that the Ministry of the Angels doth refer to, and set out the glory of Christ, and that may be seen in the observations to be given.

Observ. 1. That where Christ is, there the Angels are neer unto him, he was above the firmament, and they just under it; the firmament was upon their heads, there was only a glorious transparent firmament between Christ and them, distanced from Christ they are, but not far.

2. The Angels, wise, strong, serviceable, swift and glorious creatures, attend Christs Throne, and are subject unto him, they were under the firmament about his Throne. Is it not for the honour and great glory of a King, to have Nobles, Potentates and Princes under him, attending in his Court? It was much for *Absolonus* his glory and honour, when he had the Nobles and Princes of the Provinces before him, and under him, *Est.* 1. 3. And so it's much for the honour of Christ, that he hath Angels, which are greater then the Kings of the earth, attending him.

3. They are ready to exercise the will and pleasure of Christ, this further advances the honour of Christ; their wings were stretcht out, and they willing to move in any service, if their Lord gave out the word: when the *Centurions servants* were so willing to goe and come at his bidding, it made much for his honour, *Matth.* 8. 9. ready, cheerly, active servants are an ease and honour to their Masters: unreadinesse and unwillingnesse is
inferiours

inferiours, do disparage authority, and stain the glory of it; Angels that serve at Christs Throne are never unready or unwilling for any service.

4. They are unanimous in their Ministrations, they fall not out by the way, their wings are streight the one towards the other, they carry on the work put into their hands with love, sweet agreement, peace and content. At the birth of Christ they sung all one song, and sung without division, *Glory to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men*; as they sung, so they act, there is no disagreement amongst them: *Can two walke together, except they be agreed?* Angels do file together, and act together; they are so agreed, that no Devill, no creature can divide them, they have all but one minde, and serve the Lord Christ with one consent; and what honour is this to Christ, that hath so great, so many servants, and all minding the same thing?

5. They reverence the greatnesse and Majesty of Christ; though they be high and glorious, yet they see so vast a distance between Christ and themselves, that they cover their faces, *Isa. 6.* and their bodies here, they come not into his presence rudely, but with great respect and reverence. As God is to be had in reverence of all that are about him, *Psal. 89. 7.* so Christ is revered by all the Angels that are about him. Women are to be vail'd in the assemblies, because of the Angels, *1 Cor. 11. 10.* to shew their reverence and subjection to them being present; and Angels are covered, to shew their reverence and subjection unto Christ; it's an honour to the Angels, that in reverence to them the women are to be vail'd; and it's a great honour to Christ, that Angels reverence and adore him.

6. They are carefull to prevent all offence in their ministrations, either of God or man, of Christ or any creature; they cover up their bodies, their feet, that nothing obscene may be seen and give distaste, nothing excellent be seen, and draw to an over-valuing and Idolizing of them; so wise and cautious they are; and this addes much to the glory of Christ, that his servants the Angels, never give advantage to men or devils, to reproach their Lord and Master. Alas, how much doth Christ suffer by us, even by Ministers, and others in their ministrations? Men see our weaknesse, our pride, our vain-glory, miscarriages many wayes, and rejoyce

in our flesh, even when Christ is reproached. But Angels passe through all their employments, so that they are blamelesse, and Christ made beautiful, whom they serve.

7. That Angels are furnished for their ministrations; they have wings to fly, and wings to cover their bodies, what ever may make them and their services acceptable, speedy, successfull, they have it; and this is for the honour of Christ, those he employes in his work he inables and accomodates, they goe not forth empty, unqualified; he sent Apostles, and fill'd them with his Spirit, he gives gifts to men, and wings to Angels.

V E R. 24.

And when they went, I heard a noyse of their wings, like the noyse of great waters, as the noyse of the Almighty, the voyce of speech; as the noyse of an host; when they stood, they let down their wings.

HERE is a farther description of the Angels, by their going, their noyse, their standing, and letting down their wings. The principall is the noyse of their wings; and that I shall make most inquiry into. A difficulty incounters us in the beginning of the Verse, *when they went, I heard the noyse of their wings*; rather when they did fly was the noyse of their wings, then when they went. The originall will help us something in this strait; it's otherwise there: thus the words are read, *And I heard the noyse of their wings, like the noyse of great waters; as the voyce of the Almighty when they went*; so that there the originall brings it in, and so we may take it thus; *the noyse of their flying was as the noyse of great waters, and the noyse of their going, as the voyce of the Almighty*; or, rather thus: by going we may understand their motion, the execution of their office, and that made a great noyse, which is amplified and set out by divers similitudes.

The first similitude is of *great waters*: waters that run among the stony and rocky mountains, make a terrible noyse, gulling into the earth, and threatning the foundations of the mountains; hence *Job 14. 19.* the waters are said to weare the stones, they eat into them, making concaves and chambers therein; and for their noyse

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in the 46. *Pſalm*, v. 3. there it's no gentle murmuring, but a roaring; the Sea roares, ſo that it's heard in ſome places many miles.

The ſecond ſimilitude is, as *the voyce of the Almighty*, or, *the voyce of God*: ſome underſtand hereby, a great voyce, becauſe it's the uſuall dialect of the Hebrew tongue, to expreſſe great things, by ſaying, they are things of God; as Cedars of God, for tall and great ones, *Pſal.* 80. 10, 11. Rivers of God, for great rivers, and full of waters, *Pſal.* 65. 10. Mountains of God, for high ones, *Pſal.* 36. 6. ſo a trembling of God, *1 Sam.* 14. 15. for a very great trembling: and in like propriety of ſpeech, *the voyce of the Almighty*, for a great voyce; ſome truth in this may be granted, but ſomewhat more then a great voyce in generall is to be looked at, it bearing a Viſion, and Hieroglyphicall things preſented to the Prophet therein, we muſt therefore refer it to that in *Pſal.* 29. *even the thunder*, which is called the voyce of the Lord, *verſ.* 4. *The voyce of the Lord is powerfull, the voyce of the Lord is full of Majeſty; it breaks the Cedars, yea, the Cedars of Lebanon*; and ſo to that *Pſal.* 18. 13.

Pſal. 18. 13.

The third ſimilitude, is *the voyce of ſpeech*: ſome myſtery lieth in this, that their noiſe ſhould be like an articulate voyce, the ſpeech of man. And two things may be intended in it; either the ſpeech of man that is upon ſome terrible deſigne, and ſo ſpeaks grievous words, even words of death, and ſo it holds analogie with the other ſimilitude of *Waters*, and of *Thunder*; or elſe by *voyce of ſpeech*, the noiſe of their wings, the judgements they executed did ſpeak and proclaim Gods commands, his wrath, and the peoples ſins; if the judgements ſeemed terrible, as they were indeed; the cutting down of a Kingdome, the ruine of the chiefeſt Citie and people in the world; the voyce of ſpeech was, God commands; God is angry; you are guilty, and we muſt proceed.

The fourth and laſt ſimilitude, is, as *the noiſe of an hoſt*, this is a dreadfull noiſe; there is beating of Drums, ſound of Trumpets, clattering of Armour, jumping of Chariots, rattling of wheels, neighing, ſtamping, praucing and ruſhing of Horſes, the roaring of Cannons, the clamors of men wounded, groanes of men dying: Carry me out of the Hoſt, for I am wounded, ſaith *Abab*: O the dolefull complaints that are there, ſuch as would aſtoniſh a man of ſpirit to heare; the noiſe of the Angels was ſuch a noiſe.

Obſerv. 1. That the judgements of God executed upon Kingdomes,

domes, Cities, persons, are very dreadfull: they are like roarings of the Sea, when great storms be, and mighty Navies are dashed in pieces, and sunk into the deeps; they are formidable as the noise of an Army, marching or fighting. How dreadfull were the plagues of Egypt? that in *Exod. 9. 23, 24.* when hail, thunder, and fire were mingled together, was very grievous, such as never was; the burning of *Sodome* was dreadfull, yet *Jerusalems* judgement was fierer, *Lam. 4. 6.* all their pleasant things were spoyled, women and maids ravished in the streets; their mighty men troden under feet; young men and virgins crushed, troden down as grapes in the Wine- presse; Priests and Elders dyed for famine, children swooned in the streets, powdered out their souls in their mothers bosomes for want of bread and water, pitifull women sod their children of a span long, and made meals of them; they were slain in the Sanctuary, terrors were round about, and no way to escape left; if they looked for comfort, there was none to give it; Princes were hanged up by the hands, those did weare scarles, imbraced dunghills; Sabbaths, Sanctuary, Law, Vision, all failed, prevailing fire was in their bones, death they longed for, and found it not, God was against them, their enemies prospered, and mockt at them and their Sabbaths: Where's your God? what become of all your worship, sacrifice, prayers, fastings? they clapp their hands, hissed, wagged their heads, and said of *Jerusalem*, what this the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth? thinke the day that wee looked for; These expressions you have in the Book of *Lamentations*. *David*, a King, a Prophet, a man of a warlike spirit, that feared not the Bear, the Lion, *Goliath*, saith, *My flesh trembleth for feare of thee, I am afraid of thy judgements*, *Psal. 119. 120.* When other things did not daunt him at all, Gods judgements did; there was daunting terror in them, and no marvel, there is wrath in them, such rage, wrath, fury, as is in wilde beasts: *Hos. 5. 14.* *I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion, and as a young Lion to the House of Judah: I, even I will teare and goe away, I will take away, and none shall rescue;* such terror as is in an earth quake, that shakes the foundations of all: *Isa. 29. 6.* such as in a strong winde, and an over-flowing showre: *Ezek. 13. 13.* such as in a floud that beats out the corn, and breaks the straw in pieces: *Hab. 3. 15.* such as in the Sea or Earth swallowing up; *Psal. 21. 9.* What dreadfull

dreadfull cry, when *Corab* and his company sunk alive into the earth, when *Pharaoh* and his host were overwhelmed in the Sea ! such terror is in Gods judgements ; yea, more dreadfull yet, such as in thunder, lightning and devouring fire, *Isa. 29. 6.* yea, such as is in fire and brimstone, *Psal. 11. 6.* God is *Baal-chemab*, *Nabum 1. 2.* A Lord of wrath, so the originall is, a Possessor of wrath, and in his judgements doth distribute terrors and sorrows ; him therefore should the sonnes of men reverence.

בעל חמה

2. Gods judgements have the voyce of speech in them, they speak unto sinners, *Mic. 6. 9.* The Lords voyce cryeth unto the City, and the man of wisdom shall see thy Name : beare yee the rod, and who hath appointed it ; If the first voyce be the cry of the Prophets and Ministers, the second is the cry of the Judgements of God, the rod speaks aloud, it proclaims Gods anger, wrath, fury, jealousy, revenge, his Omniscience, holiness, justice ; the terror of the Almighty, it proclaims our folly, shame and ingratitude, treachery and great guiltiness before God ; it cries to us for repentance : when destruction lay at the gates of *Ninive*, they understood the language thereof, and repented in dust and ashes, *Jon. 3.* It cries to us for righteousness, when Gods judgements are in the earth, the Inhabitants of the world will learne righteousness, *Isa. 26. 9.* They cannot learne unlesse they be taught ; and do they not teach, and teach many lessons to feare God, whom men have forgotten in their prosperity, to make restitution to men whom they have wronged in the day of their wills ; to be charitable in censuring others, and rigid in censuring themselves ?

3. Angels are not onely swift, but efficacie us in their motions, and administrations: The great waters, mighty thunders and numerous armies make way before them, and nothing can withstand their force ; and so it is with Angels when they are upon service, none can stand before them ; they destroy armies, shake kingdoms, move all the wheels in the quarters of the world, and their motions are not faine, but forcible.

4. It's not every eare that heares the noyse of Angels wings, though their noyse be great, efficacious, like waters, thunder, the voyce of speech, as an host, yet all heare them not ; It's the Prophet heares them, and such as have divine spirits : the operations of Angels are unperceivable to most of the world ; all eyes
see

see not visions, neither do all eares heare the things that visions do speak; few are capable of divine mysteries; *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdome*, Mat. 13. 11. There be mysteries in the government of the world, as well as in the Kingdome of heaven, and it's a speciall gift to be acquainted with them; Gods secrets are made known to them that feare him, *Psal. 25. 14.* some choice, precious, excellent spirits, they heare, they see what others do not; such as turn from iniquity, *Dan. 9. 13.* such as are wise, *Hos. 14. 9.* they understand, such as are deeply interested in the truth and Churches cause, as have suffered much, and had their drosse purged out by the fire of afflictions; they heare, they see more, & greater things then the men of the world; *Nebemish, Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, John*, that were men of great sufferings, they heard voyces others heard not: In the *Revelation* it's said of, *He that hath an eare to heare, let him heare*, every man hath an outward eare, but not the inward, the eare of the heart, whereby to perceive the meaning of the Spirit; men heare not the voyce of the Spirit in the Churches, they heare men, but not the Spirit, what that speaks in the Ordinances, and as they heare it not in them, so they heare not the Spirit in the wheels, nor the voyce of it in the great judgements of God.

V E R. 25.

And there was a voyce from the Firmament, that was over their head when they stood, and had let down their wings.

HERE we have a description of the firmament, from the noise that came from it, and that is the cause of the Angels making their appearance before the Lord, and the manner of their appearance is; they stood with their wings let down.

Whose voyce this was, comes now into question; it was not the voyce of the firmament, but from above, which is in the originall, *besides from the firmament*; so that it was not the noise of voyce of the firmament, neither of any Angel; for they are here present under the firmament, but it was the voyce of Christ, of him that was above upon the throne, and it hath much in it.

מעל לרקיע
Desuper firmamēta.

1. It sets out the Majesty and State of Christ, who like a mighty Emperor, sits upon his Throne, and speaks unto his Nobles and people at distance.

2. His authority, calling in the Angels, his great agents in the world, from their services to appeare before him, they upon this voyce come from the quarters of the world, and stand about his Throne, to give account of their administrations, to receive new instructions, and are sent out by him to great services.

3. To awaken, quicken and prepare the Prophet, who had hard things to meet with, harsh people to deal withall; but when hee saw Angels come and go at the voyce of Christ, it hushed all objections, and set his spirit to attend to the voyce of Christ, to receive instructions from him, and to do his will; thought hee, Shall those glorious Angels, those great Agents in the world, hearken to Christ, be informed by him, execute his Will, and shall I a poore captive stick at it, dispute the case with him? No, no, I will be like to these Angels, heare, receive, and obey.

Of the standing of the Angels, formerly hath been spoken in the 21^h Verse, to which I refer you.

The letting down their wings, notes their cessation from imployment, as Birds or Fowls when they fall upon their feet on trees or ground, let down their wings, and rest from flying.

Obser. 1. The voyce of Christ is mighty and efficacious, a voyce that shooke the firmament, that commanded the Angels: there is Majesty, Authority, efficacy in it, *Rev.* 1. 15. its said to be *as the sound of many waters*, which notes the terriblenesse and efficaciousnesse of it, being strong, piercing, powerfull as water, that breaks into the great ships, and eats into the hard rocks, and makes a dreadful noyse. What an efficacy and Majesty was in that voyce of Christ, *Act.* 9. 4. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* it strook Saul (who was a stout and stiffe Pharisee) to the ground: so that in *Mat.* 22. 12: *Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? and he was speechlesse.* When Christ spake these few words, *I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground*, *Joh.* 18. 6. three words overthrew a great multitude, and its observable they went backward and fell. The Majesty and Power of Christs speech was such, as if stricken with thunder and lightning in their faces, they fell backward; when he rebuked the winds and

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Seas, those fierce and senseless creatures heard his voice and obeyed it: when he preached, his hearers said, he spake with authority, and not as *Scribes and Pharisees*; there is a mighty operation in the voice of Christ, it enters into the heart of the wicked, into the graves, and makes the dead to heare. *Now is the hour*, saith Christ, *that the dead shall heare the voice of the Son of God*, Joh. 5. 25. he means the dead in sins: ver. 28. *The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall heare his voice*: his voice was so powerfull, it fetched *Lazarus* out of the earth, Joh. 11. *There is power in the word of a King*, Eccles. 8. 4. Christ is the greatest King, and in his Word is the greatest power: Power over the living and dead: hence the Word of Christ is compared to piercing and efficacious things, *to goads and nails fastned*, Eccles. 12. 11. *to a hammer and fire*, Jer. 23. 29. *to a burning fire*, Jer. 20. 9. *to mighty weapons*, 2 Cor. 10. 4. *to arrowes in the heart of Kings*, Psal. 45. 5. *to a sword*, Ephes. 6. 17. *a two-edged sword*, Rev. 1. 16. *sharper then a two-edged sword*, Heb. 4. 12. it is also like to the voice of a trumpet, Rev. 1. 10. that awakened men at midnight, and summoned them to the battell.

2 When we are out of businesse in a quiet posture, then are we fittest to heare the voice of Christ; when they stood and had let down their wings, then was the voice from the firmament, then were they fit to heare, *magnalia Christi*, the Oracles and Commands of Christ; when our hands and hearts are filled, intangled with earthly employments, how unapt are we to spirituall things? and if our hearts be turbulent, stirr'd in passion, they are fitter to heare Satans voice then Christs. A sedate quiet minde out of passion, out of all intanglements, is most capable of divine things, Eccles. 9. 7. The words of wise men are heard in quiet spirits, well composed mindes: when there are great winds and tempests, we heare not others speaking; when the wind blowes in the soul, and there is a tempest, we cannot heare God speaking; Joh. 4. 16. *There was a silence, and I heard a voice*, then God spake when the silence was; he delights in a calme and meek spirit, that is of great price with him; 1 Pet. 3. 4. when spirits are in such a frame, sequestred from the world, free from distempers, God loves to communicate himself to them: in the night oft God appeared unto our fore-fathers, because then they were in a manner out of the world

and had tranquillity in their bosomes. When *John* was in *Patmos*, he heard Christs voyce; when *Ezekiel* was by the river side, he saw heaven opened, and heard a voyce from above; that in *Cant. 2. 12. The voyce of the Turtle is heard in our Land*, it's observable, the Turtle sings not in Winter, when the winds and stormes are, but when it's Spring and Summer, all quiet and serene, then her voyce is heard: So Christs voyce is heard, when Winter is over, when the tumults and stirs are laid.

3. As his voyce referres to *Ezekiel*, it affords this instruction: That there must be a voyce from above, before we are fit to heare or doe any service for God; There be no preparations, qualifications in men by vertue of man, *Ezekiel* himselfe is not fitted for to preach the Word unto this captive people, till he heare Christs voyce. Christ doth not only give the Word to be preached, but prepares the Organ to receive, and communicate it: preparatory works in man, by man are Popish conceits; the Chymists by all their art and labour, cannot bring any materiall nearer Gold then at the first, it differs specifically from Gold, and so it doth when they leave it. Counterfeit Gold is no Gold; it's not man can prepare himselfe for God and his Service: *The preparations of the heart, and answer of the tongue are of the Lord, Prov. 16. 1. And Paul saith, We are not sufficient of our selves to thinke a good thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. you may heare Paul telling of his preparatory workes, 1 Tim. 1. 13. I was a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, and injurious*, what preparations were these to Grace and Apostleship? Dead men have no preparation to life, or motion, and living men oft-times are livelesse, unfit for divine mysteries and employments, till a voyce from above prepare, quicken, and encourage them.

VER. 26.

And above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a Throne, as the appearance of a Saphire stone; and upon the likeness of the Throne, was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

27. And I saw as the colour of Amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loynes even upward; and from the appearance of his loynes even downward: I saw, as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

28. As the appearance of the bowe that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about: this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, and when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voyce of me that spake.

IN these words we have the last and best part of the Vision, being of Christ in his Throne, in the 26th Verse wee have the Throne described:

1. From the situation of it; *it was above the firmament.*
2. From the colour or likeness of it; *it was a Saphire stone.*
3. From the party in it; *and that was one had the appearance of a man.*

The word *Throne* sometimes signifies Kingdomes, and Dominions, *Dan. 9. 7. I beheld, till the Thrones were cast downe*; that is the kingdomes of the earth were ruind: sometimes it notes choise seat, fit for Kings and Judges to sit in, *1 King. 10. 13, 18. The King made a great Throne of Ivory, and overlaid it with the best Gold, there were six steps, and twelve Lions; and there was not the like in any Kingdome*; In this last sence we are here to take it, a seat for Christ to sit it, and so the Temple or Sanctuary is called the Throne of God, *Jer. 17. 12. a glorious Throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary.* A Throne here holds out unto us sundry things:

1. Divine Majesty and highnesse of Christ.
2. Kingly Dignity.
3. Triumphant Glory.
4. Judiciary Power, *Psal. 9. 4. Thou satest in the Throne judging right.*

right. Kingly and judiciary power are chiefly meant, 2 Cor. 18. 18. I saw the Lord sitting upon his Throne, and all the Host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left : and Rev. 20. 11, 12. I saw a great white Throne, and him that sat on it, and the dead, small and great, stood before God, and the Books were opened ; here Christ sat in judgement over the Jewes, and exercised his power, pronouncing sentence against them.

The next thing is the likenes; as the appearance of a Saphire stone. The glory of this Throne was great, Solomons was of Ivory and Gold, but Christs is of Saphire. The Scripture mentions Palaces, Psal. 45. 8. Towers, Cant. 7. 4. Beds, Amos 6. 4. Houses, Amos 3. 5. Vessels, Rev. 18. 12. And Thrones of Ivory, 2 Cron. 9. 17. but none of Saphires ; the Saphire is a stone of admirable worth and splendor, the chiefest of Pearles ; and Pererius saith, it was among the Ancient alwayes of great esteeme : The Empire and high Priesthood were signified by it. Among the Egyptians, the chiefe Priests being Judges, also wore a Saphire about their necks ; and at that time, when Cardinals are newly created, the Pope sends to each of them a Saphire, which sets out dignity and greatnesse.

For the colour of the stone ; Pliny saith, in his lib. 37. c. 9. that it is of an ayrie colour, he should have said of a skie or blew colour ; for when the heavens are most cleare, and have a transparent pleasant blew, then the Saphire doth most resemble them ; very fair and beautifull : Jerome will have Saphire to be from Sapphar, Pulcher, because these stones are very faire and delightfull. Pliny in the place before cited, saith, they doe flame and sparkle with purple veins, much like the colour of Brimstone, when it's first fired, there is a pleasant blew, with a little purple in it, and so oft it's in the heavens when they are cleer. The Saphire and heavens cleernesse, are brought in together by Moses, Exod. 24. 10. they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were a paved work of a Saphire stone, and, as it were, the body of heaven in its cleernesse ; the pavement was Saphire, and the colour of it, as the cleernesse of heaven. We must inquire what the Saphire represents unto us ; for surely there is something, yea, much in it.

Should we tell you, what vertue is given to this stone by men of great note, it would take up much time. Avicen, Albertus, and Mathiolas, affirm this stone to be good against Melancholy, and the

Gemma gemmarum, Alu. lent. Hieroglyph. 4. 1. Ætæus.

Diorum mura et opima beneficiis invitare conciliare ferunt, ut vel hinc Eccl. 1. 1. maxime digni rade vulgus prestat, Ruen. de gemmis.

Caest colore conspicui sunt Ruen. ibid. שפר Aureis punctis lucere.

the quarterne ague : *Galen* and *Dioscorides*, that it helps against poysoning, ruptures and exulcerations ; but I will passe by such things, and come to that is nearer our purpose. The Saphire is an Embleme :

Symbolum libertatis,

1. Of liberty, so you shall finde it to speak in that *Exod. 24. 10.* the *Israelites* were come from their pavement of bricks to one of Saphire ; now the God of *Israel* was exalting them to precious liberty from their vile bondage.

Puritatis & soliditatis.

2. Of purity and solidity ; it hath the colour and cleernesse of heaven, it hath no impurity in it ; things impure are the ruine of themselves, and so are unsolid, but that's pure is firme, as the firmament, it's pure and solid : Hence the Saphire is a foundation stone of the new and heavenly *Jerusalem*, *Rev. 21. 19.*

Sublimitatis celestium mysteriorum.

Sapphirum celestiale quid portendere significat ipsius color Sanct.

3. Of the incomprehensibleness of divine mysteries ; it hath a skie colour, the colour of the firmament it selfe, and that blewnesse we see in the heavens is intense light, and sets out the incomprehensibility of Gods wayes.

**Castitatis. veneros conpescit affectus. Rivet.*

4. * Of chastity ; it's an enemy to wanton lusts : hence *Cant. 5. 14.* Christs belly is said to be overlaid with Saphires, and his Throne being saphirine, it tells us, that Christ expects chastity in the spirituall marriage, between him and his Church.

Vigoris & letitiae vultus eorum Sapphirus.

5. Of vigour and cheerfulness ; *Lam. 4. 7.* Their polishing was of Saphire, their faces were saphirine ; so the *Chaldee* reads it, their countenance before were full of vigour, cheerfull, like those are well polished ; but now through famine, black they were withered, and like a stick without all cheerfulness.

Gloria.

6. Of glory ; and here in this Vision, Christs glory is likened to Saphire, the glory of his Throne was Saphirine. From the likenesse of the Throne, we come to the party, whose the Throne is, and that is, *one had the appearance of a man* : who this is, must be cleared ; it was not God the Father, or God the Holy Ghost, for the learned observe, that neither Father nor the Holy Ghost have ever appeared in mans shape, but that will not hold, for the Ancient of dayes God the Father appeared to *Daniel*, *Chap. 7. Vers. 9.* in the form of a man. Expositors do much agree it was the Lord Christ, and of that judgement shall we be ; not because they say so, this were a blinde ground for a reasonall man to be led by ; but because we finde in Scripture, the

Christ hath oft appeared in Visions like unto man, *Dan. 9. 13. I saw in the night Visions, and behold one like the Sonne of man; the Jews acknowledge this to be meant of Messiah: so in Rev. 1. 13. one like the Son of man appeared in the midst of the seven Candlesticks, and Rev. 14. 14. I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sate like unto the Son of man.* By these places we have good warrant to conceive, that it was Christ that did appeare unto Ezekiel in this Vision.

Quest. But seeing Christ was not yet incarnate, why is he here presented in the likenesse of man?

Ans. 1. Because in his divine nature he is invisible, and being to manifest himselfe, he appeared in the forme of man, as being most suitable to the nature of man.

2. It was a prefiguration of his incarnation, that in the fulnesse of time his Divine nature should assume our flesh into the unity of his person.

3. That according to his humane nature, he should sit upon the Throne of God, and judge the sonnes of men: he was *administrator Patris*, the great *Agent* of his Father.

Whether Christ in this Vision sate or stood, is doubted, because it's said, *above upon it*; neither standing nor sitting being expressed: but my inclinations are to conceive, that the Lord Christ sate, and stood not.

1. Because Thrones are not for standing, but sitting; and we never finde in Scripture, that any stood in Thrones, but sate they have; sitting in Thrones is the usuall phrase in Scripture, *1 King. 2. 12. Solomon sate upon the Throne of David his father, and in the 22th Chap. 10. The King of Israel, and the King of Judah, as they sate upon each Throne, and Isa. 6. 1. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a Throne, Rev. 4. 10. The twenty four Elders fell down before him that sate on the Throne.*

2. Kings and Judges here on earth do not use to stand, but sit, which doth more fully set out their State and Majesty, and if Kings on earth do so, how much more this King in heaven? Besides, standing is a servants posture, *Dent. 17. 12. and Ch. 10. v. 8.* but sitting is not, *Luke 17. 7, 8.* that is the Masters, the Lords posture.

Obser. 1. The wisdom of Gods Spirit in laying downe things to

to prevent the corruptions and mistakes of man ; we are apt to think grossly of the divine nature, that God is visible, corporeal, contained in place, sitting as man ; but see how the Spirit of God carries it here, and takes off from all such conceits ; here is mention of likenesse, appearance of things, not that they were materially so ; it's the likenesse of a Throne, the appearance of a Sapphire, and upon the likenesse of the Throne, was the appearance of a man ; no true body : The *Anthropomorphites* thought God to be like unto us, to have his Throne in heaven, and sit in it, and so farre did these men proceed in this opinion, of Gods corporeity, and circumscription, that they assembled into troops, and threatned to stone all opposed it : So tenacious of, and violent for errors are men, even the deluded sons of men.

2. That man is not capable of immediate accessse to, and converse with God : Here be many steps and degrees before the Prophet comes to see Christ, and then it's not in his Divine nature, but in the appearance of a man. Here be the living creatures in the way, a firmament over their heads, and then a Throne, and that of Saphirine colour, and afterward a sight of Christ in the forme of a man, and then converse. If the Lord should not condescend to our weaknesse, and mantle up his Majesty, there could be no communion between him and us.

3. That the Lord Christ, who appeared like man, hath Kingly Majesty : Here is a Throne, and a Throne set before him. There present royall Majesty unto us, and this Throne presents Christ when, on earth he was in the forme of a servant, but in heaven he appeared to the Prophet in the forme of a King. Neither hath he a Throne only, but what ever appertains to Kingly *Unction* he had, and such as other Kings had not, *he was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power, Acts 10. 38. Promulgated Zach. 9. 9. O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee. A Crown, Heb. 2. 9. We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour the Jews crowned him with thornes, the Lord with glory ; A Scepter he hath also, and better then of Gold, Heb. 1. 8. A Scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy Kingdom ; a royall guard of Angels they are under the firmament, stand ready at his footstool, he hath his Agents and Ambassadors in the kingdom of the world, to declare his pleasure, to transact his appointments ; Eph. 4. 11. Apostles*

Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers; these negotiate the great affaires of this King, they dispense the mysteries of his Kingdom, he is not a titular King, but hath large Dominions, Dan. 7. 14. *There was given him dominion and glory, and a Kingdome, that all people, nations, languages should serve him; and Ps. 2. 8. The heathen are his inheritance, and the ends of the earth his possession.* He hath a Legislative power, he makes and abrogates Lawes at his pleasure. He came of the Princely Tribe that made Lawes; *Judah bare the Scepter, and gave the Lawes, and therefore by David is called, The Law-giver, Psal. 60. 7. and Christ descending thence, and being typified by the King of Judah, he is the true Law-giver, Jam. 4. 12. there is one Law-giver, and therefore, Mat. 28. last, Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; he hath a pardoning and punishing power, he pardoned Mary Magdalene, and punished him that had not on his wedding garment.* Gen. 49. 10.

4. That Christ is not only King, but the chiefeft of Kings, his Throne is not on earth, but in heaven, it's above the firmament, that was over Angels heads, and Christs Throne is above them both; so that all power in heaven and earth are under Christ; his Throne is exalted above them all, *Heb. 1. 6. Let all the Angels of God worship him; the greatest Archangel must do it; those thrones, for so they are termed, Col. 1. 16. must stoop to this Throne, Ephes. 1. 20. 21. God hath set Christ in heavenly places, among the heavenly thrones, yea, in supercelestiall places; for it followes, he hath set him far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, even Angels are under the firmament, where his feet stand, and all the Princes of the earth are under him, Rev. 1. 5. He is the Prince of the Kings of the earth; The inscription of his vesture and thigh, is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; this title is not Xerxes, Nebuchadnezzars, nor Alexanders, but Christs alone: the kings of the world when they sit upon their thrones, they have their expansum over their heads, some cloth of state made of the richest stuffe that the brains of men can reach unto, bedeckt with Diamonds and Pearls, that are most costly; but this over their throne intimates their subjection to some higher power; but it's not so with Christ, he is above the Expansum, nothing is over his head, Angels, Kings, Devils,*

Devils, are under his feet, and unto him must every knee bow.

5. That the Lord Christ, who hath such a glorious Throne, is exceeding glorious himself; his Throne is like Saphires, of a Saphirine colour, which is very beautifull; it's like the glory of the heavens: if an earthly throne be a *Throne of glory*, as *Hanna* styles it, 1 *Sam.* 2. 8. what is this Throne? a resemblance of the Throne of his glory, which he speakes of in *Matth.* 19. 28. and *Chap.* 25. *vers.* 31. *The cloathing of the Kings daughter*, *Psalm.* 45. 13. *was wrought Gold*, a glorious outside, but there was more glory within, *she was all glorious within*; so if Christs Throne, the outside of it be so glorious, what is he in the Throne? all glorious, all glory, *Job.* 1. 14. *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten*. If Apostles saw glory in him, being on earth, in his low condition, what did our Prophets see in him, being above the firmament, in his Throne and glorious condition? The Scriptures set him out, not only to be glorious, but glory: *Psalm.* 24. 8. *King of glory*, *Jam.* 2. 1. *Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, in respect of persons*. The word *Lord* in the second place is not in the originall, but thus it stands there: have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the glory*; so that Christ is glory and *the glory*, the glory of heaven, the glory of the world, the glory of *Sion*, the glory of the Soul: and not only is Christ glorious and glory, but he is, *Heb.* 1. 3. the brightnesse of glory; that is, spotlesse, perfect, intense, exceeding glory, he is the brightnesse of the glory of the Father, or the Fathers glory shines out most brightly and intensly in the Son; the Fathers glory in the whole creation, is but darknesse to his glory in Christ, and therefore he is brightnesse of glory, and every thing that comes from Christ hath some beames of glory in it; his works are called *glorious*, *Luke* 13. 17. *they rejoyced for all the glorious things done by him*, the liberty he purchased is *glorious liberty*, *Rom.* 8. 21. his Church is *glorious*, *Ephes.* 5. 27. his Gospel is *glorious*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 11.

6. That Christs Throne must not be of common stone, but precious ones, of Saphires; the pavement of God was of *stones or bricks of Saphire*, *Exod.* 24. 10. and Christs throne must be of Saphires; the Church is Christs Throne, visible and conspicuous as the heavens, *Jerem.* 3. 17. *Jerusalem* is called the *throne of the Lord*, and the Churches under the Gospel are the throne of Christ, he

7. Nene

and as it is
in the

sits in the Congregations, and bears rule in them, *Rev. 2. 13.* I know where thou dwellest, where Satans *seat or throne is*, there was a congregation of persecutors, Idolaters, and unclean parties; for such sinners are mentioned in the 13. and 14. verses; and this company was the seat and throne of Satan: many congregations are thrones of iniquity, & shall the *throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee*? *Psal. 94. 20.* But godly congregations are the Seat and Throne of Christ. Now as the conscience, which is the invisible seat of Christ, must be pure, *1 Tim. 3. 9. holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*; so must the visible seat of Christ be pure, the congregation where he will sit and reigne; therefore the promise is, *Isa. 54. 11, 12.* that the state of the Church under the Gospel, shall be better then it was under the Law; there all stones were laid in the building, but here should be a difference made; God will lay stones with fair colours, *Saphires, Agats, Carbuncles, and precious stones*; and that it's meant of Gospel-times and Churches, the words following in the 13. verse shew. *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord*, which Christ applies to these times, *Joh 6. 45.* So then the Churches now are to be of Saphires, such as have a heavenly vertue and purity in them, not of Sand-stones, Tode-stones, or any High-way-stones, they are fitter to make Satan a seat then Christ a Throne, *1 Pet. 2. 5.* they are called lively stones, not dead stones, that have no true grace in them, but lively ones they must be, that make a house, a throne for Christ: Stones, that it may be a solid building, lively, that it may be a usefull profitable building, and Saphire, that it may be a pure and glorious building.

7. Judiciary power is put into the hand of Christ, not only as God, but as man; *there was the appearance of a man, above upon the throne*, there sate the Son of man, and sitting upon the Thron imports power, and power judicall, therefore when Christ tells his Disciples of sitting upon the twelve thrones, he tells them also of judging the twelve tribes of *Israel*, *Mat. 19. 28.* and that Christ had such power, and that as Son of man, appeares, *Joh. 5. 27.* *The father hath given the Son authority to execute judgement, because he is the Son of man*, verse 22. *he hath committed all judgement to the Son*, both judgement of actions, things, and persons, *Acts 17. 31.* *God will judge the world in righteousness by that man he hath ordained*, the last judgement shall be by Christ,

even that great judgement : So particular judgements here, as now Christ sate in Judgement upon *Jerusalem*, and sentenced them to death and captivity. And because judgement is *opus potestatis*, an act of power, therefore Christ himselfe tels us, that all power in heaven and earth is given unto him, *Mat.* 28. 18.

8. The Lord Christ actually ruleth the world, and all things in it ; he sits upon the Throne, and exerciseth his power and authority, *1 King.* 2. 12. There sate *Solomon* upon the throne of *David* his Father, that is, he ruled the kingdome, and all the affaires of it : so Christ sitting upon the Throne, presents to us his active ruling ; the Prophet might see, he held the globe of the world in his hand ; that he raised tempests out of the North, sent abroad the four living creatures in the severall parts of the world ; that he orders the wheelles, and causes them to stand or go at his pleasure ; the Lord Christ is not out of office, or idle now in heaven, though he sits upon a Throne of glory at his Fathers right hand ; he is not neglective of the world, *he upholds it by his power*, *Heb.* 1. 3. he sends out his *Angels to minister unto his*, verse the last ; he still gives gifts to men, and provides for his Church, *Ephes.* 4. and makes the Word the savour of life or death to men ; he restrains the wrath of enemies, and hedges up their wayes, he makes use of them as rods to drive his stragling sheep into the fold ; he subdues hearts and spirits to himselfe, and protects them being subdued ; he discovers, confounds the enemies plots and persons.

9. The Lord Christ doth governe all with great tranquillity, and with great facility ; he sits upon the Throne, and doth all that imployes quietnesse of minde. A sedate temper, there is no passion or perturbation in him, he is a Lion for his power, a Lamb for his meeknesse ; he rules by counsell and wisdom in much quietnesse, *Act.* 17. 31. *he judgeth in righteousness*, and what he doth is done without difficulty ; let him speak the word, and presently it's done ; if he bids *Nebuchadnezzar* goe and sack *Jerusalem*, carry them away to *Babylon*, he goes, he accomplisheth his will fully.

10. That Christ is ready ever to heare the causes and complaints of his Church, he sits upon the Throne, other Judges are of the Bench and Throne, and parties agrieved may come unseason-

seasonably to them, but it's not so here, Christ sits upon the Throne, and that constantly, to assure us, that he is alwayes willing and ready to heare the motions, his shall make, and to execute judgements upon their enemies : which is matter of great comfort to poore afflicted soules, that they may at any time finde this Judge sitting, and open their grievances unto him, and have audience ; other Judges are absent from their seats, or not at leasure, or statly, and will not give way to poore oppressed ones to ease themselves, and acquaint them with their suits, none of these are to be feared here.

11. Christ sitting on the Throne, prompts unto us, that Christ should accomplish the whole work of mans redemption, which the Father hath appointed him, and so sit downe in glory upon the Throne. He appeared as man in that nature, he did and suffered the will of God on earth, and in that nature he sate down at the right hand of God ; had not Christ been to fulfill all righteousness, he had not appeared as man sitting on the throne, and had he not done it, he should never have returned to heaven and sate down in glory ; he hath satisfied the Law, is freed from the guilt of our sins, and hath presently finished the work undertaken, and therefore told his Father, he had glorified him on earth ; he had finished the work he had given him to do ; and thereupon desired him to glorifie him, and set him upon the Throne, *Joh. 17. 4, 5.* which is done : and this may be of singular comfort against all our imperfections, corruptions, temptations, and death it self.

VER. 17.

I saw, as the colour of Amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, &c.

Here the man that sate upon the Throne is described unto us:

1. In generall.
2. More particularly.
 1. In generall ; *I saw as the colour of Amber.*
 2. Particularly, *upwards and downwards ; upwards, as the appearance of fire round about within it : from the appearance of his loynes*

Quasi
שׁוֹמֵר
festinatio
corsumens.

loynes upward; so that this fire was more latent, and then downwards the fire was more visible, and had brightnesse about it. Touching the word *Hashmal*, or *Chasmal*, I have spoken largely in the 4th verse, and it signifies a coale intently hot, and, as it were, presently consuming what ever it touches; such coals are most fierie & lively: and they that render the word *color vividissimus*, a most lively colour, or as the colour of a burning coal, give the truest sence of the word. Before it referred to the Angels, here to Christ: the word *Chasmal* read backward, is *Lammasbach*, or *Lammaschiach*, which is interpreted, the Messiah; it's the *Cabalistic* observation, and the summe in generall is this: *I saw as the colour of Amber*; I saw Christ that sate upon the Throne, all of an intense fierie colour, like the most hot burning coals: and so the Lord Christ is set forth, *Rev. 1. 14, 15. His eyes were as a flame of fire, his feet like unto fine brasse, as if they burned in a furnace*; so here, from head to feet, Christ is presented in a fiery colour: and it is frequent in Scripture, when acts of power and judgement are to be executed against Kingdoms or Churches, to have Christ presented in a fiery way: so *Rev. 10. 1.* the mighty Angel Christ, brought in there with his face shining as the Sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and presently there were great thunders, and dreadful things: so *Rev. 2. 18.* he is brought in with eyes like fire, and feet like brasse, and then tels *Thyatira* he hath a few things against her: so *Rev. 19. 11, 12, 13.* In righteousness he doth judge and make war, and then his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his vesture dipped in blood: thus is he described, when some great designs are abroad as sentencing a church, warring against his enemies, &c.

The particular description is next, which falls into farther inquiry: *from his loynes upward, was as the appearance of fire within it*; there is a difference between the fire in the upward parts of Christ, and that in his lower, the one is externall, the other internall; *Within it*, within what? within the colour of the Amber; or according to the word, as we have interpreted it, within that fire of burning hot coales, there was as the appearance of fire in the concave of it round about; so that there was a fire within a fire, a secret hidden fire burning inwardly; this fire doth not put forth its vertue so apparently as the other did, but burns inwardly, and reflected upon it selfe. What this fire was,

Ignis latent,
& igneus in-
trinfecus,
Sanct.

our work to open unto you; By fire within, *Gregory* in his seventh *Homily*, understands Christ before his incarnation, he was *ignis in Judea tantum*, there only he shined, the *Gentiles* knew him not; but after his incarnation he shined from his loynes downward, and was made known unto all; but by it we understand the divine nature of Christ, which being full of perfection, too bright for humane eyes, was more inward and remote from sense; and it s likened unto fire in regard of the lustre and efficacy of it, which none can indure. By the burning hot coales, we may understand the burning zeale of Christ to the glory of God in executing judgement upon the wicked, and at this time he sate in judgement upon *Jerusalem*.

From his loynes downward, there was as the appearance of fire, and it had brightnesse round about it: this fire and brightnesse was more apparent, visible and enlightning then the other, and it represents to us the great glory and Majesty of the Lord Christ, as it is exhibitiveto to, and comprehensive by creatures; it's the glory of humane nature, which was the lower part of Christ, lesse glorious; the strength of the divine natures glory shining through it, and giving out it selfe in that way and degree, as man is capable of: the Sun in a cloud may be beheld by the weakest eye, in it selfe, not by the strongest, the glory of both Christs natures are shadowed out unto us in this verse.

And it had brightnesse round about; *Splendor ei circum*: that fire produced a brightnesse, and a brightnesse on every side; it sets out the glory of Christ in execution of justice upon those are delinquents: or, the glory of his presence and actions, he dwels in light, and all his actions are lightsome.

Observ. 1. That the Lord Christ, as man, is very glorious; he was here in the appearance of man, and the Prophet saw him, having the colour of *Chasmal*, that is, like unto the most burning and hottest coale or coales; not those in common fires, but those that are in a furnace, which glow and shine most; in his transfiguration, which was a *Preludium* to his glorious condition in heaven, Christs face shined as the Sun, *Mat. 17.* 2. What a glorious creature is the Sun! and Christs face as glorious as that is: in *Dan. 12. 3.* it's said, *The Wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever;* but

Dan. 10. 6.
Rev. 1. 16.

Epist. ad Eph.

but Christ, as the Sun, which is the great glory of the heavens; the godly may have firmament, and star-brightnesse, but Christ Sun brightnesse. Neither doth that reach the glory of Christs humane nature; it goes beyond it, *Acts 26. 13.* when Christ appeared to *Paul* at his conversion, what saith he? *I saw a light from heaven above the brightnesse of the Sun, shining round about me;* this was the light of the glory of Christ glorified, and it was beyond the brightnesse of the Sun: The Star that led the Wise men to Christ, *Ignatius* thinkes did exceed all the rest in light and brightnesse, that none ever was like it; be it so, yet the glory of Christs humane nature is far above it; no creature is so glorious, as fully to represent the glory of it: therefore, saith the Apostle, *Phil. 3. last, He shall change our vile bodies, and make them like, not the Stars or Sun, that were too low, but like his glorious body, the originall is, his body of glory: that is, his body which is exceeding glorious, above the glory of all creatures.*

2. That the Lord Christ sitting upon the Throne in judgement, is very dreadfull: he is, *ignis vividissimus*, as hot burning coals: the Prophet *Malachi* tels you of his comming, and when he comes, who may abide the day of his comming; & who shal stand when he appeareth? for he is like refiners fire; and he shal sit as a refiner & purifier of silver, *Cha. 3. 2, 3.* A refiners fire is the hottest, it melts, purges, consumes, and is terrible; such a fire is Christ in his judgements, *Jerusalem* could not stand before him, but he destroys them by the strength of *Babylon*, & afterward is terrible to *Babylon* it self, *Jer. 51. 25. I am against thee, O destroying mountain, speaking of Babylon, which destroyest all the earth, I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and rowl thee down from the rocks, & will make thee a burnt mountain;* this burning coal, Christ, wil fire and burn down that great mountain; and what then? they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations, but thou shalt be desolate for ever; severe was the Spirit of Christ against *Babylon* in the letter, and as severe is he now against *Babylon* in the mystery: he shall destroy them that destroyeth the earth, *Rev. 11. 13.* He makes *Jerusalem* a burthenstone to all that meddle with it, *Zach. 12. 3.* There is mention made in the 28. of our Prophet, 14. of stones of fire; Christ is the stone of fire that breaks and burnes the kingdomes of the earth; many kingdomes in *Europe* are on fire

fire at this day, and almost broken in pieces, and burnt to ashes : we may see that Christ is terrible in his Judgements, he is riding now upon his red horse, taking peace from the earth : dipping his garments in blood, and causing his great sword to eat flesh and drink blood : he is upon his black horse, bringing in famine and pestilence : the pale horse is saddled, and death is on the back of him, and intends to ride through our Cities, Countries, Townes, Families, and make a great slaughter, *Revel. 6.* and will yet be more terrible, *verl. 17.* the great day of his wrath is at hand, and who shall be able to stand ? neither Kings, great men, Captaines, mighty ones, nor any other sort can do it : they will call on rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him that sits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: his eyes sparkled with fire, his feet are like burning brasse, and out of his mouth issue flames of fire : and to set out the dreadfulnesse of this Judge, *Paul* tells us, he shall come in *flames of fire*, *2 Thes. 1. 8.* And as his appearance, so his name will be dreadfull, for he hath an unknown name belongs to him in his way of ruling and judgement, *Rev. 19. 12.* and this will be known, when he sets up his Kingdome among the *Jewes*, saith *Brightman*.

3. That he is zealous in sentencing and punishing Malefactors, he is *pruna summe ignita*, and not only so, but here is a fire within, zeal in his brest, a spirit of burning within: you may see the zeal of Christ in *Joh. 2. 14, 15, 16, 17.* The Temple being a Type of Christ, and by divine appointment set apart for worship, should not have been made a place for merchandize, but Christ coming & finding in the Temple those that sold Oxen, Sheep, Doves, and changers of money sitting, made a scourge of small cords, and whipt them out of the Temple like a company of Rogues, drove out the sheep and Oxen, powred out the changers money, overthrew the tables, bid them take away their Doves, and not make his Fathers House an house of merchandize ; they might have said, All these are brought for sacrificing, for publique service and the worship of God ; and what dost thou pretend Gods glory, and take away his sacrifice? we will whip thee out of the Temple, and use thee as an enemy to God and his worship : and it was a wonder they did not, Christ being a poore man, having no countenance from the Rulers, and meddling with rude fellows, and dealing with them

so sharply and shamefully, as to whip them out : it was wonder they tore him not in pieces, or stoned him to death for it : Christs zeale was hot, and carried him on to punish and disgrace those delinquents, not fearing their rage or malice, so Gods glory might be repaired. This zeal in Christ was so intense, that it warmed the hearts of his Disciples, who upon it, remembered what was writ of him : *The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.* How zealous was Christ in his carriage towards the *Asian Churches* ? he tels *Ephesus*, that except she repent, recover her first love, and do her first works, *he will come quickly, remove her candlestick out of its place, & unchurch her, Rev. 2. 5.* To *Pergamus* also he saith. Repent for I come quickly, and wil fight against thee with the sword of my mouth, ver. 16. So for *Thyatira*, wherein *Jesabel* lived, and did much hurt, *Behold*, saith Christ, *I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds : and, I will kill her children with death, &c.* ver. 22, 23. So for *Laodicea*, how zealous is Christ against that zelesse church : *I know thou art neither hot nor cold, I would thou wert cold or hot, so then, because thou art lukewarm, I will spew thee out of my mouth,* Chap. 3. 15, 16. His proceeding with the churches answers his apparition to *John*, in the vision which was with eyes as a flame of fire, and feet like burning brasse, Chap. 1. 14, 15.

4. That the divine nature of Christ is too glorious for mans eyes to behold; and therefore is presented here more remote and hidden from the Prophets sight : *There was the appearance of fire in the colour of Amber, or, within the outward fire;* this was glorious, that exceeding glorious, the fire in the fire ; here is infinite glory shut up, obscured by that is lesse glorious. You heard before of Christs humane nature, that it is very glorious ; much more the Divine that communicates the lustre & glory to the human, 2 *Per. 1. 17.* a voyce came from the excellent glory, glory that excell'd all the glory of the creature, that excell'd all the apprehensions of creatures from the glory greatly becoming, or great becoming glory : it's glory that greatly becomes the great God : & such is the glory of the Divine nature of Christ, it's excellent glory : and if it were let out a little, in the strength and fulnesse of it, we should be sunke by it : for Glory is a weighty thing, the Hebrew word for glory, signifies *gravitas, pondus, onus*, intimating, that

ὁ δὲ τὸς μέγας
ἀποστόλος δὲ
εἶπεν.

כבוד

glory

glory, as it's a bright, so a heaive thing : brightnesse and weightnesse are in it, 2 Cor. 4. 17. it's call'd a weight of glory & the glory of Christs Divine nature would oppresse us, if fully opened to our view : *Moses* made a request to God, which if he had granted, would have bin his death, *Exo.* 33. 18. *I beseech thee* (saith he) *show me thy glory*, God tels him in the 20. ver. *no man can see me & live*, my glory will be a consuming fire unto thee ; yet God is pleased to communicate the glory of his divine nature here to *Moses* in that way might do him good, and not destroy him : he puts him into the cleft of a rock, and shewes him his back parts, *v.* 23. which was some glorious body, as *Tostatus* thinks, some humane shape, as others conceive, and not unlikely to be Christ, as he appeared in his transfiguration, full of glory and Majesty ; thus God condescended to *Moses*, and so here to the Prophet, he sees the glory of : the divine nature in the humane, which in it self is not subject to mans sense, but through divine dispensation is made visible according to mans capacity. If we cannot behold the Sun for its brightnesse, nor one creature behold another, without prejudice to it selfe ; how can we behold the exceeding glory of the Creator, of the divine nature, without great danger, without death ? the glory of such Majesty would turn us into nothing.

5. That Christs actions, even judiciary ones, are glorious ; there was brightnesse round about his presence, sitting in judgement, and his actual punishing of the *Jewes* with war, famine, captivity, are all full of glory : This supreme Majesty executing judgement, fills all with brightnesse and glory ; when the Angels came with power to judge *Babylon*, *Rev.* 18. 1, 2. it's said, *the earth was lightened with his glory* ; Acts of judgement and justice are glorious and shining : *Ribera* saith, this is meant of judgement upon *Rome*, which shall be evident to all, and fill the world with the glory of it, when it shall be fulfilled ; God was glorious, as well in destroying the *Egyptians*, as delivering the *Israelites* ; there is so much beauty and brightnesse in workes of justice and judgement, that they are call'd the glory of the Lord, *Numb.* 14. 21. The people upon the ill report brought upon the Land of *Canaan* murmured, thought to make a Captaine, and go back to *Egypt* ; whereupon God threatned to smite them with the pestilence, and to disinherit them, *Moses* interposes, intercedes for them, God answers him,

O'ester.
Ofianders

*Non cadit sub
sensus corporis.
Juxta possibi-
litatem huma-
nam.
Fulgor ille
tance maiesta-
tis nos in nubi-
lum redigeret.*

Rev. 14. 10.
The fire and
brimstone
they are tor-
mented with,
is, vindicta
Dei ex qua
quasi sumus
prodiit Dei
laus & gloria,
Alecxi.

and saith, As thy request I have pardoned them; but as truly as I live, *all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord*; what's that? the glory of his just judgements upon them in the Wilderness: and shortly after, *Corah* and his confederates were swallowed alive by the earth; *Zimri* and *Cosbi* were run thorow for their wickednesse, and in these and other particulars, was the glory of the Lord seen evidently: Would Magistrates and those have power in their hands, shine and be glorious? let them execute judgement, and see justice done. *Solomon* by that act of judgement between the two Harlots, touching the dead and the living childe, became renowned. What a glorious act was in it, when *Darius* set *Daniel* at liberty, and caused his accusers to be cast into the den of Lions? If men in place would punish delinquents, executing justice in the feare of God without respect of persons, distemper of affections, or any sinister respects, they would be like Angels, and enlighten the City and Kingdome with glory; such a one is *Sol justitie*, and fills the world with the beams of righteousness; he is *dextra Dei*, and relieves Kingdomes, Cities, Families with equity.

VER. 28.

*As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain:
so was the appearance of the brightnesse round about.*

HERE is a description of that brightnesse or glory which compassed him that sate upon the Throne; himselfe was glorious, the brightnesse of glory, and he had circumferentiall brightnesse, and this is resembled unto the Bow in the cloud, that which we call the Rainbow; first mention of it is in the 9 of *Genesis*, verse 13. where God puts double honour upon it.

1. He owne it for his; *I do set my Bow in the cloud*: and,
2. Makes it foderall, a token of the Covenant between him and the earth; and so by divine institution is exalted to a supernaturall work, a sacramentall signe.

I shall speak something of this Bow Philosophically, and something Theologically.

1. Philosophically, the generation of it is in the wombe of a cloud,

cloud, and the cause naturall, viz. the reverberation of the Sun-beames in a moyst cloud; for when there is a moyst cloud opposite to the Sun, fitly disposed to receive the Sun-beams, and to reflect them, then is the Rain-bowes birth and appearance; the figure of it a semicircle, sometimes lesse, but never greater; sometimes there hath been a Rain-bow in the night from the beams of the Moone, which is weak, and like a white cloud.

Mylichius observes, that from the Sun hath sometimes been a white Rain-bow, but constantly the Rain-bow is of divers colours, specially blew, green, and red, all very glorious, and wonderful, drawing the eyes of the world to behold it; whereupon *Plato* thinks it is called the daughter of Wonder, it's so admired.

The naturall signification of it is rain, and moyst weather; *Scaliger* saith, if it be in the morning, it betokens rain, if in the evening, fair weather; but we may finde by observation, that evening Rain-bows in our Horizons have been messengers of rain, as oft as morning ones; the *Grecians* call it *Iris*, which *Eusebius* saith, is from *ἰσθῆς nuntio*, because it doth foretell rain, some derive it from *ἰρις* contention; because it presageth stormy and wet weather: *Homer* constantly calleth it Ὀρέσσεια & Ὀρέσσεια, a divine messenger, to tell the world there should be rain and storm. This is the observation of some learned; that if the colours of the Bow appeare thick, and end in blacknesse of a cloud, rain followes certainly, but if they grow cleerer, and so vanish, a serene followes.

Besides this signification, *Pliny* attributes a special operation to it; where the hornes of the Bow do light, Plants and Herbs are made more fragrant and pleasant; and *Scal.* is of the same opinion, who saith, the incubation of the Rain-bow upon Plants, makes them more odoriferous; and *Aristotle* tels us, lib. 5. *Hist. Animal.* cap. 22. that it doth much conduce to the generation of hony-deaw.

2. For the Theologicall consideration of this Bow; it is to put us in mind of the great flood that drowned the world, and to assure us, that God will never more do so, *Gen.* 9. 14. 15. When I bring a cloud over the earth, and the Bow shall be seen in the cloud, I will remember my Covenant between me, you, and every living creature, & the water shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. When we

In lib. 2. *Plin.*
Thaumasios
filium propter
admiracionem.
In *Theophr.*

Exercitat. 86.

Lib. 12. c. 22.
Iridis incubatio
in Plantis
facit
odoratiores.

Exercit. 80.

Ad generationem
hony-deaw
et mellis acris.

see

see the Bow therefore in the heavens, we should,

1. Be led to consideration of divine Justice against the iniquities of the world, which he punished most severely, as to destroy all flesh: And

2. To mind the rich mercy of God to our forefathers and ourselves, to whom he hath bound himself by covenant, and the Bow being the signe of it, that he will never destroy the world againe in that kinde; and whereas some make the red colour in the Bow a signe of the worlds destruction by fire at last, it hath foundation in mans brain, not in any institution of God.

*Qui infra
lumbos imaginis
apparerebat
Middon,
A lapid*

But I come to the words of our Prophet; here is a *Bow in a cloud in the day of raine, &c.* some make the brightnesse here to be that which is downwards from his loynes, and to be like unto the Bow in the cloud, and so they exclude all the parts from his loynes upward, from having reference to this Bow, understanding by his upper parts, the divine nature, by his lower the humane; and something there is in it, because the Text saith, in the 27th verse, *I saw from the appearance of his loynes downwards, as the appearance of fire, and it had brightnes round about it.* That fire had not the other, but it seems to me more suitable to the Text and truth, that this brightnesse, being in circuit round about it, did compass out the lower parts only, but the whole Throne and person of Christ; and so we finde in *Rev. 4. 3.* where Christ is upon the Throne, that there is a Rain-bow round about it, and therefore conceive, that here also the Rain-bow was round about the Throne.

We will not stand upon that longer, but come to see what the Bow points at: And,

1. It is an Embleme of glory, Gods glory is much seene in the heavens alwayes; but when the Bow is set in the cloud, *Habet sessionem aliquam non spernendam, ac si Deus adderet aliquam nudum Coeli aspectum, Cal.* It's a glorious creature, and hath glorious colours in it, various, and yet beautifull, affecting the eye for the present, more then all the glory of the heavens besides, and I finde among Interpreters, that it signifies,

First, the glory and beauty of divine providence in its various proceedings with the wicked and the godly, it punisheth the one, it rewards the other; and when these are done, there is so much glory in it, that Angels and men are affected with it.

Secondly,

Secoudly, the glory which is conveyed and communicated to the creatures; for in the heavens the glory of God doth shine. You know the Rain-bowes originall and being is from the beames of the Sun, communicated, received, and reflected, and though it be glorious, yet it's a borrowed glory, and so informes us, that the glory in all creatures is from another, from Christ, *By him Kings raigne, He gives gifts to the sonnes of men, He enlighthens every man that comes into the world.*

2. It is a token of mercy and favour; it's a Bow without arrows, the back (saith *Ramban*) of it being towards the heavens, & ends downward, it's a signe of mercy; for when one shooteth arrows, he holds the back from him. And that it is a signe of grace and mercy, we will make out by Scripture unto you: that covenant made by *Noah* about the waters in *Isa. 54. 8, 9, 10.* is applied to the covenant of Grace, stricken with man in Christ; *In a little wrath, saith God, I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindnes wil I have mercy on thee; for this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn I would not be wroth with thee: for the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindnes shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.* Here you see the Covenant of waters applyed to the Covenant of grace; and in the *Revelation* you shall see the same signe, even the Rain-bow applyed for a sign of grace, *Rev. 4. 3.* There is Christ sitting upon the Throne, and a Rain-bow round about it, which shews, that the Throne of Christ is compassed about with mercy: and *Rev. 10. 1.* *A Rain-bow was upon his head;* Christ is presented in Visions, *Isa. 9. 6.* crowned with the Rain-bow, as a messenger of grace and peace; for he is the Prince of peace, and his Crowne is the Rain-bow, a certain Embleme of peace, *Gen. 9. 13, 14.* The Rain-bow hath variety of colours, and all glorious, and so doth the more fitly resemble the mercies of Christ, which are various and glorious.

This brightnesse then in the figure of a Rain-bow, signifies grace and mercy, held out to those that were godly, or should repent of their wickednesse: the brightnesse before noted the glory of his judiciary proceeding, and here being form'd into a Bow, it betokens mercy.

Observ. 1.

Symbolum elementæ, gratiæ & misericordiæ.

Observ. 1. That mercy and grace come to us through the humane nature of Christ, from thence goeth out the brightness and the beams that make the Bow; when the word was made flesh, then went out glory, *John* 1. 14. and grace, *Ver.* 16. Then was *Sol* in *nube*, the most glorious Rain-bow that ever was or shall be in the world; he was not a signe of peace, but our *peace*, *Ephes.* 2. 14. by his blood we are brought nigh, for *he is our peace*.

2. God hath his daies of Rain: When the flood was, then there was rain to purpose forty days together: If God hath rained bread, *Exod.* 16. he hath rain'd wrath, *Job* 20. 23. *snakes, storms, fire, brimstone*, *Psal.* 11. God rains blood upon kingdoms, *Ezek.* 38. 22. *I will plead against him with pestilence, and with blood, and I will rain upon him, and his bands, and the many people with him, over-flowing rain, great hail-stones, fire and brimstone.*

3. That the Lord Christ in wrath remembers mercy, he mingles mercy with judgement; he sits as Judge upon the Throne, he pronounces sentence against a sinfull kingdome, executing the vengeance written against sinners, and yet here he is compassed with the Rain-bow: shewing, that he will not utterly destroy the *Jewes*, a remnant should be spared. When the great deluge of water was drowning the world, yet *Noah* and his were saved, there was mercy in the midst of judgement: and here is a Judge with a Rain-bow over his head, to assure the godly, they should not perish in this flood of wrath, now powring out upō the *Jewes*. *Jerome* saith of the Bow, it is a signe of mercy, and the covenant which God made with man, that when it appeared in the cloud, we might know we should not perish by a flood: and much more when Christ sits in judgement with the Rain-bow about him, may the godly know, that they shall not perish by the wrath of God: if the glory of his Majesty, stateliness of his Throne, terror of his Justice, and the greatnesse of his power do at any time discourage us, we must look at the Rain-bow round about him, and remember his Throne is compassed with mercy. It's said of the *Jewes*, when they see the Rain-bow, they go forth, confesse their sins, but will not looke upon it. Confession of sins, or any duty whatsoever, will do us no good, unlesse we looke upon the Bow: the mercy of Christ, now was a storm, and in it a Rain-bow, for the Prophet, and godly to looke at, it's said in the Text the Bow

in the cloud in the day of rain, then it's a rainy day when God rains snares, fire and brimstone, and horrible tempest upon the wicked, even then the bow is in the cloud, and the righteous should look for it, and look to it; they should remember the covenant and mercy of it: Is it not a rainy and stormy time now? is not this great Prince angry with the Kings and Kingdoms of the earth? doth he not frown, chide, and smite, and that with deadly strokes in many places? Let us look at the Rain-bow now, and know, if there should come an overflowing scourge, a deluge of wrath upon the world, yet the *Noahs* shall be arked and safe, the righteous shall be hid, Christ will manifest mercy to them. Saith *John*, Rev. 4. 2. *I was in the Spirit, and beheld, a Throne was set in heaven, and there was a Rain-bow round about the Throne*; no sooner was *John* in the Spirit, but he saw the Throne and the Rain-bow; let us now be in the Spirit, look with eyes of faith, and we shall see the Throne, him sits on it, and the bow round about him; and then, though Kingdoms lye under the floods of errors, superstition and ungodlinesse, though drown'd in troubles and blood, yet we shall see God and Christ in a way of love and mercy towards us.

4. That Justice and Mercy do compasse the Throne of Christ; there was brightnes round about, and the bow was round about; go to Christs Throne any way, there is nothing but justice for the sinner, unlesse penitent and beleeving, and if such, nothing but mercy.

This was the appearance of the likenesse of the glory of the Lord; and when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voyce of one that spake.

Here is the conclusion of the Vision, and in it we have the scope of all was presented to the Prophets view, and it is to manifest the infinite glory of God; and then follows a double effect:

First, upon the sight of it, *he fell upon his face*; And Secondly, *He heares a voyce*; and so a fit passage is made to that which follows.

The first thing is the manifestation of Gods glory: and the glory of God is considerable,

1. In God himself, in the Divine nature, and there it is infinite glorious, exceeding glory.

D d

2 In

*Quid est mun-
dus nisi Deus
explicatus?*

2. In the creation, as it is exprested and opened in the volume of the creatures, there Gods glory is greatly seen, *Isa. 6. 3. The earth is full of his glory*; the Hebrew is, *the fulnesse of the earth is his glory*; the world is glorious, and filled with Gods glory, it's nothing else but Gods glory interpreted and opened unto us in the creatures, and divine providence about them.

3. In divine dispensations towards his Church and people; Gods glory is in the firmament, in all the creatures, but more specially and fully in the Church, *Psal. 29. 9. In his Temple doth every one speake of his glory*, there it is most visible, affecting and provoking of every one to speak. In the world few take notice of it, but in the Temple every one sees it, and speaks of it; the world is God opened, and so glorious; the Church is Christ opened, and so very glorious: this made *David* long to be in the Sanctuary, when he was in the Wildernesse; and why so? *to see thy power and thy glory, Psa. 63. 2. Could not David see them in the heavens, in the mountains, in the goodly Cedars, and other works of God?* Yes, but not as in the Sanctuary; and therefore he saith, *to see thy power and glory, as I have seen thee in thy Sanctuary*; there I have seen thee otherwise then ever elsewhere; there he saw the King upon his Throne and in his glory.

The glory of God in each of these, is held forth in this Vision, in some measure: there was the Spirit in the wheels, a fire within, by which the glory of the divine nature appeared: there was a whirlwind, a cloud, fire, brightnesse, living creatures, wheels moving severall ways, which represent the glory of God in the world and government of it: there was a firmament and a throne, one sitting upon it; surrounded with a Rain-bow, which sets out the glory of God in his severall dispensations towards his Church, both in his judgements, mercies, and government thereof.

A Question is moved; Whether our Prophet saw the glory of God?

The Answer is; It was the appearance of the likenesse of the glory of the Lord; he doth not say, he saw God in his essence; it's acknowledged by most, that we cannot see Gods essence while we are Pilgrims on earth, and absent in the flesh: *Augustine* and *Aquinas* are of opinion, that *Moses* and *Paul* saw God in his essence, but they were men, and not without their errors; for had

*De vi. Lib
de vision. D. 20.
Rom 2.
Tb. 2. q. 174.
275.*

had they seen Gods essence, their faith had ceased, being swallowed up in vision.

The School-man would help it thus : the light of glory in them had not a permanent being, but was given them transitively. *Eff: permanent per modum transiens.* But this answer will not bear up the opinion : for faith and vision of glory cannot consist in a larger tract, or in the least instant of time ; as in one man there cannot be a perfect and obscure light together, the full light of the Sun, and least degree of darknesse cannot at once be in the eye. And farther, if they saw the essence of God, they had not the act of faith, but evidence ; for if a man had seen *Rome*, and after remembers it, he saith not he believes there is such a City, but he hath seen it ; and so of Gods essence : It must not be granted that ever any saw Gods essence, you have incontrollable authority for it, *Joh. 1. 18. No man hath seen God at any time. Durand.* faith, these words are to be understood exclusively,

1. Of corporeall vision : for with a bodily eye, none ever did, or shall see God.
2. Of intellectuall naturall Vision : because a naturall understanding cannot attain unto the cleer vision of God.
3. Of the vision of comprehension, from all created understandings : though Angels and Saints in heaven see God, yet not comprehensively : and *1 Tim. 6. 16. Whom no man hath seen, nor can see*; there's a deniall both of the fact and the possibility; *Anst.* himself confesseth in *1. 2. de Trin.* That the substance of God is not *c. 16, 17, 18. ullo modo corporaliter visibilem*, not to be seen at all with the eyes of flesh ; and the rule of the Schoolmen touching visions and apparitions, is infallible, that the nature of God is not seen with the eyes of the body, but only some corporeall thing is exhibited, which being visibly seen, or sensibly perceived, God is invisibly represented to the understanding. *Al. Hales.*

But *Moses* saw God face to face, *Exod. 33. 11.* So *Jacob* saw God face to face, *Gen. 32.*

Answ. Those Patriarchs and Prophets that are said to see God, saw him in divers resemblances, and this is an unanswerable argument, that they never saw Gods essence, for that is pure, immixt, alwayes alike, neither standing nor sitting, having no parts, no shape or likenesse to any thing ; therefore saith *Athanasius*, those

Deum non fuisse ab antiquis patribus visum nisi in assumptione creature, secundum Dicitatem vero esse invisibilem.

Fathers saw God in some creature, not in his owne nature, for it is invisible.

Againe, this phrased of seeing God face to face, in the Hebrew dialect imports two things :

First, Familiarity.

Secondly, Perspicuity.

1. Familiarity, they had familiar converse with God, *Deut. 5. 4.* the Lord talketh with you face to face ; you asked him questions, and he gave you answers ; and it's evident that this is intended in the phrase, *Exo. 33. 11.* The Lord spake to *Moses* face to face, as a man speaks with his friend, *Moses* questioned it with God, and God most friendly answered him : So in *Numb. 12. 8.* *Month to month will I speake with him*, it notes the presentiality and familiarity of God with *Moses*.

2. Perspicuity, cleernesse, they saw God face to face ; that is, comparatively ; others saw God in dreames and visions, which were most obscure, but these saw God more cleerly, had more illustrious visions of God ; they saw Gods back-parts, these saw Gods face ; and the phrase is used in the New Testament, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* *Then shall we see face to face* ; that is, more fully and perfectly then here ; but whether we shall see the divine essence in patria, in heaven, is questionable. *Chrysost. Hom. 14.* on *John*, saith, That before the incarnation the Son of God was *Angelus invisibilis* ; and if they in their glory saw not the divine nature of Christ, it's like we shall not. Whether Christ saw the Father or Holy Ghost with the eyes of his body, is questionable, if some doubt it, others deny it : *Halenf.* grants, that the soul of Christ saw God perfectly from his conception ; but he saith not, the eye of his body saw him : *Aquinas* saith, that glorified eyes shall see God in that manner, as now our eyes do see the life of man ; life not seen with a bodily eye, as a thing visible by it self, but by the intervention of something else, and so accidentally become, sensible ; it's our understanding, not the eye, reacheth life, and so in God. But in *1 John 3.* *We shall see him as he is.*

Ans. He speaks of a new and unutterable way of seeing God. We shall see him as he is to be seen, *mediante lumine glorie* ; the beams of the Sun so fill the eye, but we cannot behold the nature of it ; and whether it be so in heaven, we shall not know, till

till we come there; let us get holinesse, and then we shall see him will resolve this doubt.

Observ. 1. That all the glory is seen of God in this life any wayes, is but the appearance and likeness of the glory of God. There was much and great glory in this vision, there is more in the world in the creatures, more in the Church, and yet all this is only a shadow, and a small appearance of the glory of God. If we should see ten thousand Torches lighted up in a dark night, they make a glorious light; yet they are nothing to the light of the Sun, when that comes, torch-light, star-light, seem appearances of light, rather then light it self: So when the glory of God shall be revealed, it will darken all other glory; and there was not so great a difference between the light in *Goshen*, and darknesse in *Egypt*, as there will be between the glory of God and that glory now appears in the world. The glory of God is neither expresseible or comprehensible by any or all the creatures. The glory that *Isaiah* saw on earth, and that *Ezekiel* saw in the heavens, did not expresse the thousand part of this glory; and neither heaven nor earth are able to comprehend the same.

2. See the infinite goodnesse of the Lord, that will expose that to the eyes of his servants, which is so deare unto him; his owne glory. Precious things of Princes and great ones, are not common for the view of all, but choyce friends, favorites shall see them. God hath nothing more precious then his glory; yet this shall his choyce friends and favourites see; and because they cannot see it in the perfection of it, God will draw a picture of it with his owne hand, and hold forth to the eyes of his here: *Ezekiel* had an appearance of the glory of the Lord, but it's the greater mercy, that God wil put forth creating power in a vision, and present the likeness of his glory in variety of things, according to the capacity, and for the advantage of his servants: so *Moses* saw the glory of the Lord in the Mount; so Christ shewed unto *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, his glory in his transfiguration, *Mat.* 17. *Isaiah*, he had a glorious vision, Chap 6. and so glorious it was, that it's called the glory of the Lord; and this did the Prophet *Isaiah* see in the likeness and appearance of it, not in its owne nature, for no man yet ever could see the glory of God and live.

Jehovah

Jehovah: this name by the learned *Jewes*, is called,

1. *Hashem*, that name emphatically, as the chiefest of all the rest.

2. The name of four letters.

3. The great Name.

4. The blessed Name; for the high Priest did pronounce it only once a year, and that in the Temple, at the feast of Propitiation, at the solemne blessing, *Numb. 6. 24, 25.*

5. The glorious Name,

6. The name Separate, *shem Hammephorash*, because separate from ambiguity, saith *Maimon*, from our knowledge saith the son of *Maimon*.

7. The name appropriated to God, because it is most proper to him.

8. The name of remembring, because it brings to mind the being of God.

9. The name of essence or being, *Shemhaetzem*, a name of substance.

*Plebi sub pena
mortis ejus
pronuntiatio
vetita fuit.*

Buxtorf.

*Qui pronun-
tiat nomen*

*Tetragramma
tum, non habet
partem in fu-
turo seculo.*

Gerard. in loc.

*Spasmo cor-
repti interie-
runt.*

Shindl.

*Ab יהוה fuit,
est.*

*אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה
וְיֵשׁוּעַ מְשִׁיחַ
בְּנוֹנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ*

The *Jewes* are exceeding superstitious about this name, and say it must not be pronounced; they term it The *unexpressible Name*; themselves never utter it, but *Adonai*, or *Elohim* in stead of it: they tell us, that the womans son in the 24. of *Levit.* was accused of blasphemy, and stoned to death, because he pronounced this name *Jehovah*. And there is a relation of the Priests of the Sanctuary, that not knowing how to read this name, being written by *Moses*,* they laughed, and were smitten to death of God for it. It's strange to think what miracles the *Jewes* attribute to this name: *Moses* had it writ in a Rod or Staffe, Christ got it, and put it in his thigh, and so by vertue of it, they both did all their miracles: they tell of one *David* a Magician, that by vertue of this name went in one day a journey of ten dayes. But to leave Rabbinicall conceits: This name *Jehovah* imports essence, being, existence: and by it, the eternity, independency, efficacy and truth of God are laid before us, together with his being: and here it's attributed to Christ, and tels us, that he hath his being of himself: he is compleat in himself, and an infinite sea of being: Eternall, *Rev. 1. 8.* Independent, *Rev. 1. 5.* Efficacious, giving being, life and perfection to all creatures.

Hch. 1.

Hebr. 1. 2, 3. Col. 1. 16, 17. he is true, yea, truth : fulfilling the promises, 2 Cor. 1. 20.

Observ. 1. Jesus Christ, who sate upon the Throne here, is J E H O V A H, of the same essence with the Father and the Holy Ghost : he is not consubstantial, but substantiall with them, not like the Father, or like the Spirit, but the same : the one differs from the other personally, but not essentially, 1 Job. 5. 7. There be three that beare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one : one in essence, one in propriety, one J E H O V A H, Jer. 23. 6. the Prophet speaking of Christ, tells us what his name shall be called, *Jehovah, Zidkenu, The Lord our righteousness*, and in Mal. 3. 1. *Jehovah whom you seek shall suddenly come to his Temple* : by the name J E H O V A H, is meant Christ, who is God : and this is of great concernment, it's the foundation of our faith in Christ, of our worshipping of Christ, of our salvation by Christ, and of all good from Christ ; if he were not *Jehovah*, the Gospel should be a lye, our faith a fancy, our worship false, the Church a fable, all men lost, and that for ever.

2. Again, that the glory here represented in this Vision, was not the glory of a creature, but of *Jehovah*, there was a man presented to his eye, but *Jehovah* to his faith : it was the appearance of the glory of the Lord ; not only of Christ as man, but as God-man, and so the glory was glorious glory.

And when I saw it, I fell upon my face.

Here is the first effect of it, when he had this vision, beheld this glory, he was amazed, so smitten with the lustre of it, that he could stand no longer, but down he falls, and that upon his face. There is frequent mention in Scripture, that upon visions, and appearances of Divine Majesty the servants of God have fallen down, Deut. 8. 17. *He fell upon his face*, and Saul, Acts 9. 4. *he fell to the earth*, Abraham he fell on his face when God appeared to him, Gen. 17. 3. The three Disciples Christ took up into the mount, when they saw the glory, and heard the voyce, they fell on their faces. There was a great difference between falling on the face and falling on the back. To fall forward, notes respect and humility, but to fall backward is a note of sin and guilt : Abraham fell twice upon his face, the Prophets oft ; the godly when

Cadere in faciem; observantia est, & humilitatem semper olit; sed retro cadere peccatum supporti, aut indur. Jer.

when they are to deal with God, fall forwards, the wicked backward, except old *Eli*. We read not of any good man that fell backward; but all those came to take Christ, *Joh. 18. 6. Went backwards, and fell to the ground*: So *Isa. 28. 13. Precept upon precept, that they might go and fall backwards*.

There be divers reasons or grounds of mens falling upon their faces, in visions and apparitions of God.

1. The Majesty of God that is present in these visions, and some way or other represented to those that have the Visions: *Isa. Dan. 10. 6.*

2. The lustre of Divine glory that accompanies the same; this made *Paul* and his company fall to the ground, *Act. 26. 13, 14.*

3. Some new and dreadfull thing that appears in the Vision as here; creatures with four faces; and four wings, wheels, rings, full of eyes, and so high, that they are dreadfull.

4. Sense of their owne frailty and weaknesse: Visions having divine Majesty, Glory, and some terriblenesse in them, have wrought strange effects upon infirme men; they have lockt up their senses, and put them in a deep sleep, *Dan. 8. 18. 10. Chap. 9. made them sick and faint many dayes, Dan. 8. 27.* much grieved and troubled their spirits, *Dan. 7. 15.* taken away their strength and comeliness, *Dan. 10. 8.* smitten dumb, *Dan. 10. 15.* breathlesse, *verse 17.*

5. To testifie two things: first, thankfulness for some mercy received or promised; upon this ground *Abraham* fell on his face, *Gen. 17. 23.* when God appeared to him, and told him, that he would make a covenant with him, and multiply him exceedingly, he fell on his face, to manifest, as his humility, so especially the gratefull frame of his spirit toward God for such a mercy.

2. Reverence, worship and respect unto divine Majesty: falling upon the face notes so much in the language of *Canaan*: *Clark. 18. 28. Jethaphan bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem before the Lord and worshipped him* so bowing in *Psal. 72. 9.* is to note reverence and worship, *They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust: They shall come in to him finally bowing their faces to the ground, and kissing the dust of his feet, shall testifie their reverence and subjection unto him.* *Isa. 49. 23.*

That which made our Prophet fall down on his face here, was feare and amazement at the apprehension of the Majesty of Christ, the great glory that appeared, newnesse and dreadfulness of things in the Vision.

Observ. 1. See what mischief sin hath done unto us ; it hath disabled us from partaking of our greatest good, the sight of glory is the happinesse of the creature : when *Peter* saw Christs transfiguration but dimly, he said ; *O Master, it's good being here !* but sin hath made us incapable of the sight of glory ; *Peter* and the rest fell upon their faces, and could not behold it as otherwise they might.

Gregory in his 8th *Hom.* saith, it's matter of great mourning, to consider we are fallen into such an estate, as that we cannot behold what would make us happy ; we cannot indure that good, that glory, which God created us to behold ; yea, such weaknesse hath sin brought us to, that we cannot beare the sight of the appearance of the likenesse of glory. They are weak eyes that cannot endure the Sun-beams, they more weake that cannot indure the light which is more remote from the brightnesse and glory of the Sun ; and so here, man cannot indure the glory of the Lord, nor the likenesse of it, nor the appearance of the likenesse.

2. That the sight of glory is an humbling thing ; when the Prophet saw the appearance of the glory of the Lord, he falls upon his face, then he is conscious of his own weaknesse and worthlesnesse, then he trembles, and sees the great disproportion between Majesty and nothingnesse, *Isa.* 40. 5. *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it ;* and then followes, *all flesh is grasse ;* glory will convince us that we are but grasse, it's not hearing will do it, at least, not so effectually : seeing, and seeing of glory doth humble mightily, seeing of misery causeth grief, *mine eye affecteth mine heart ;* but seeing of glory causeth godly sorrow, *Job* 42. 5, 6. *Now mine eyes seeth thee, I abhorre my selfe, and repent in dust and ashes ;* when he saw the Lord and his glory, then he abhorred himself, his owne righteousness, all his confidences, duties, and what ever the heart and wit of man catcheth hold of, and repented, and said, What am I unto God, the great, the glorious God? he is so infinitely glorious and distanced from me, that I am no better then dust and ashes.

*Cum magnis
maioris pen-
sare et consi-
derare cum la-
crymis debe-
mus in quan-
tam miseria
& infirmita-
tem cecidimus,
qui & ipsum
bonum ferre
non possumus
ad quod vi-
deretur creati
sumus.*

*Nisi aliquid de
eternitate in
mente videre-
mus, nunquam
in facie xpi
penitendo ca-
teremus. Gre*

and worthy to be buried under them out of his sight; & so *Isaiah* when he saw the glory of the Lord, then was he sensible of his own vilenesse, and cries out, *Wo is me, I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, though a Prophet, yet a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts*: he hath heard the Seraphims cry, *Holy, holy, holy, the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory*; but this wrought not so powerfully as the sight of his glory: now he saw his sin, what a great and foul sinner he was, and therefore saith he, *Wo is me, &c.*

3. That those be thoroughly humbled with the sense of their own vileness, and weakness, are fittest to hear divine truths, and to receive divine mysteries. *Ezekiel* falls on his face, and then hears a voyce; so was it with *Daniel*, flesh and blood is apt to be lifted up, to trust in something of its own; men look at, and like their own parts, their graces, some confidence or other we are apt to catch hold of, but we must let all go, be low in our own eyes, if we will be fit auditors of Christ, we must fall down at the feet of his Throne, if we will heare him speak from his Throne, *3 am. 4. 6.* he giveth grace to the humble, they finde the choyselt favours at his hands; *Moses*, a meek man, yea, the meekest of all living, and God shewed himselfe the most to him, and so to him as not to others, *Numb. 12. 8.* He spake to him mouth to mouth, *Deut. 34. 10.* There arose not a Prophet in Israel like to *Moses*, whom the Lord knew face to face, *Isa. 66. 2.*

And I heard a voyce of one that spake.

This is the second effect following his sight of the glory of God; he first falls upon his face, and then hears a voyce, this was the voyce of him that sate upon the Throne, and was so glorious, that the Prophet could not behold him; it was not the voyce of the heavens, *Psal. 19. 3.* nor of the thunder, *Psal. 29. 3.* but of Christ, and the voyce of Christ is taken in the Scripture:

First, for an extraordinary voyce, having extraordinary power with it, *Joh. 5. 28.* those that are in the grave shall heare his voyce, that is, the power of his voyce shall fetch them out of their graves.

Secondly, for the doctrine of Christ, *Joh. 10. 27.* My sheep heare my voyce, that is, my Doctrine; they do not hear Christ immediately speaking, but they heare his Gospel, his Ministers opening it unto them.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, for the speech of Christ, speaking unto others, *Act. 9. 4.* *I heard a voyce, saying, Saul, Saul, &c.* such is the voyce here, Christ speaking himselfe unto *Ezekiel*.

This Vision and Voyce was;

First, to affect the Prophet, that he might be humbled, awakened, quickned up, and prepared to the work the Lord Christ intended him.

Secondly, to confirm him,

1. In his call to his Ministry; he was to be a Prophet to this people in a strange Land, and therefore hath an extraordinary call to it, Christ from heaven appears.

2. In the truth of his Prophecie; he should utter nothing but what he had from Christ, the author of all truth, he would put words into his mouth.

3. In the whole race and work of his Ministry, that he might not be discouraged; seeing that he had seen such a vision, heard such a voyce.

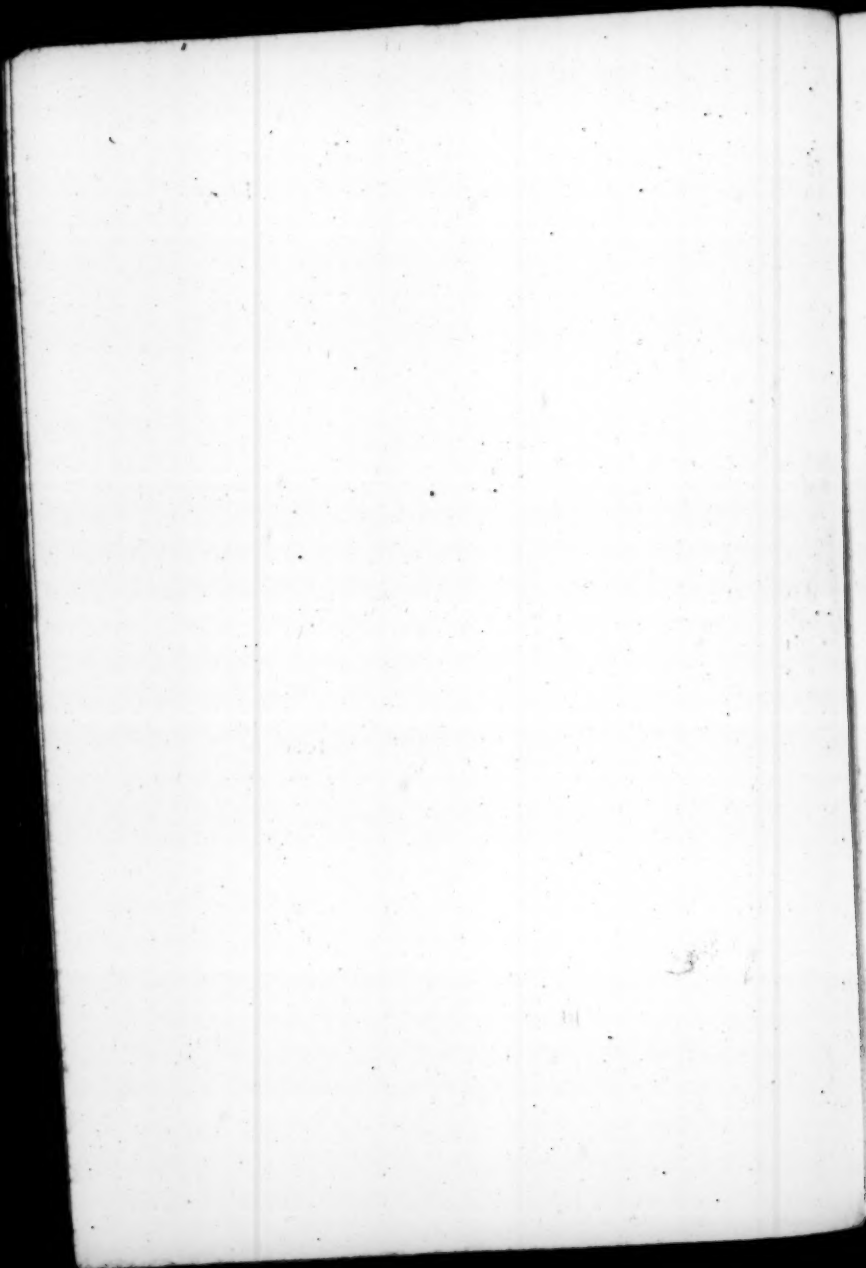
Thirdly, to confirm the *Jewes, Gentiles*, all to whom this Prophecy should come, of the Majesty, reality, and truth of it,

God sets one sense awork after another; his eye was taken up before with the sight of great and glorious things, now his eares come to be exercised and fill'd with as choyce truths, as the eye had objects; and after there is a roll for his taste and touching, God lets in mercy and goodnesse to us through every window and door.

Note 1.

2.

That great feare doth astonish and hinder judgement; he heard a voyce, but knew not whose it was, feare doth disturbe and surprize.





Ezekiel, Chap. 2. Vers. 1.

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speake unto thee.



IN the former Chapter we met with great deeps and difficulties, mysteries of a high nature; and if any light have appeared in the opening of them, let him that sits upon the Throne have the glory of it; by his assistance we have gone over sundry rocks, and through some depths; and we desire by the same assistance to proceed,

and now we are come from the mountains to the Plains, where we may walk with more safety.

The glory of the Lord being set out in this government of the world, in his dispensations towards his Church in the antecedent Chapter: The scope of this Chapter is, to corroborate *Ezekiel* smitten down with the sight of glory, and to shew his Call unto his Propheticall Office; the parts are the confirming, sending and instructing of the Prophet.

1. His confirmation and comforting is laid down in the two first verses.

2. His sending in the three next to the sixth verse.

3. His instructing from the sixth to the ninth; after that, mention is made of a roll in the two last verses, and in the beginning of the next Chapter, which is of much concernment, as in its place may appear.

The confirming of the Prophet is:

1. By the Word of God in the first verse.

2. By his Spirit in the second verse.

In quibus liberis gressibus locutionis nostra intrepidum pedem ponamus, Greg. Hom. 9. in Ezek.

In the first verse are two things considerable :

1. The party speaking.

2. The matter spoken ; where you have,

1. The Appellation ; *Son of man.*

2. The Command ; *Stand upon thy feet.*

3. The ground of it, which is a gracious promise ; *And I will speake unto thee.*

It's Christ who speakes, and unto *Ezekiel*, whom he calls *the Son of man* ; the originall is, *the sonne of Adam*, that is, of earthly man : for, as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 15. 47. The first Adam was of the earth earthly*, and *Adam* signifies earth, or red earth, whereof his body was made ; and when we read in Scripture this phrase, it notes out to us,

1. Our base beginning, that we are of the earth ; there is no man, be he never so excellent, high, wise, honourable, but he is the son of *Adam*, *terra filius*, a brat of the earth, *Psal. 49. 2. Both low and high, Adam and Ish* : the base man and the noble man, as the *Chaldee* renders it : both the sons of *Adam*, and the sons of *Jacob* are so, they have all one father, and all one mother, and that is the earth.

2. Our frailty, that we are earthen vessels and soon broken in pieces, *Psal. 9. 20. Put them in feare, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men*, they think themselves gods, but shew them thy power, thine iron Rod and Scepter, bring a War, a Plague, a Famine amongst them, and then they will know that they are frail weak men.

3. Our worthlesnes and fitnesse to be rejected, who amongst us regards a clod of earth, an earthen vessell, silver or golden ones, some prize, & prize too much, but earthly ones are contemptible : Nations are as the *drops of the bucket*, and *small dust of the ballance*, *Isa. 40.* and are not they contemptible things ? this made *David* to wonder, and say, *Psal. 144. 3. Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him ? or the son of man, the son of earth, that thou makest account of him, that thou visitest him ? Psal. 8. 4. and Job 7. 17. What is man, that thou shouldest magnifie him ; and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him ?* these be high and great expectations to be bestowed upon so poor a thing as man is, to take knowledge of him : and such knowledge, as to make account of him, is

to minde him, visit him, magnifie him, to set the heart upon him, this is exceeding much from an infinite, great and glorious God towards worthlesse men, and not credible, if the Spirit of God had not revealed it.

4. Our end, that we are earth, thence we came, and thither we must, *Gen. 3. 19. Dust thou art, and unto dust thou must return.*

This title of *Son of man*, I do not find given to any but three, in the Book of God; once to *Daniel*, *Chap. 8. 17. Understand, O sonne of man*, forty times and upwards to Christ, and above eighty times to this our Prophet, but with this difference: *Ezekiel* is called the *Son of man* by another, Christ alwaies calls himself so. *Ezekiel* is four times in this *Chapter* so called, and it's given him,

1. To prevent pride, say some Expositors: he had a glorious Vision, was among Angels, saw the Lord Christ, and was to enter upon the Propheticall Function, the least of which might stir corruption, and make pride blossome; when *Paul* had his rapture into the third heavens, and heard things unutterable, what saith he, *2 Cor. 12. 7. Lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of revelation; there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, &c.* *Paul* was in danger of being lifted up, but God preventeth it; and so here, *Ezekiel* is minded of his mean originall, his frailty, worthlesnesse and end, that he might not be exalted with his Vision or Office; we are exceeding apt upon the receipt of great mercies, to grow proud and confident, which are evill in any, but worst in a Prophet; and therefore, to prevent these, he calls him *Son of man*.

2. To frame his spirit to a right estimate of himselfe, through out the whole course of his Office, that what ever good was done he should still remember he was the Son of man, and it was God, not he that did it. It's a hard thing to keep the heart in an humble frame and fittest, to give unto God the glory of what he doth by us; God helps our Prophet by this title, which runs through the whole Prophecy, & took such interest in his heart, that whatsoever was seen, heard, said, or done by him, *the Son of man*, the glory of all was given to Christ, the Son of God, he could say, I am an earthen vessell, if there be heavenly treasure in it, he that sate upon the Throne put it in, for mine own part, I am the Son of man, like all the children of *Adam*; and if there be any difference, he

*Nihil supra
naturæ huma-
næ vires sibi
assumeret.*

he made it, and if there be any glory, he shall have it ; so *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly then they all ;* that seems a derogating speech, but he corrects himself for it ; *yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

3. To let *Ezekiel* and others see the rich bounty and goodness of God, in that he would take a Son of man, who is earth, frail, and worthlesse, and exalt him to so high and honourable a condition, & specially at such a time as this was, when God was wroth with his inheritance, laid them waste, had brought them into *Babylon*, and was stripping them naked of all comforts, yet now to give them a Prophet, to call out *Ezekiel*, this could not but put his spirit, and all their spirits into admiration of Gods goodness.

Stand upon thy feet.

Here is the Command of Christ, *Ezekiel*, I see thou art a frail man, stricken with great feare, and canst not indure my glory and presence, *stand up* ; this is not for thy hurt, but good, I appeare not to confound thee, but to comfort thee, not to cast thee down, but to exalt thee.

Stantis est divinum auditio, non resupini, Apollin.

Why doth the Lord command standing ?

1. It's a fitter posture for hearing then lying on the ground was, *Stand*, that thou mayest recover thy spirits, and heare the better what I shall say unto thee : so the Angel bid *Daniel stand upright*, *Dan.* 10. 11. Oracles are for standers, not prostrate ones, therefore, when *Balaam* came with the Oracles of God to *Balak*, he said, *Rise up Balak, and heare*, *Numb.* 23. 18. shew thou reverence and respect to the Word of God ; for Kings were wont to stand when messengers from God were brought unto them : so *Eglon* rose out of his seat when *Ehud* told him he had a message from God unto him, *Jud.* 3. 20. *Eusebius* tells us of *Constantine* the great, that he did heare the Word standing, and being requested to rest himselfe in his royall throne, which was set there for that purpose, he refused, and being pressed, after long time of hearing, to sit down, with a sterne countenance he answered : It were a great sin in me, not to heare attentively when God is spoken of.

Nefas esse insitum de Deo disputationibus negligenter aures prebore, Euseb. de vita Constant.

2. To shew, that all mundane things should be beneath us, when we deal with God, we must not lye down and imbrace them, but stand up, and have them under our feet : *Jerome* saith, the Saints

Stand

stand and tread all down, but sinners they fall and imbrace the earth and furniture of it, *Rev. 12. 1.* the Church hath the Moon under her feet: all sublunary things are under the Saints feet, not in their hearts, or over their heads. *Sanctorum est*
fl. etc.

3. That he might be in a posture for service, *Ephes. 6. 14.* *Stand, having your loynes girt*; prostration on the earth is no posture for employment, but standing is; and the Lord Christ would not have his, so affected with his greatnesse and glory, so reverentiall, as to be hindered, or disabled from his service; holy reverence doth not make idle or inept to service, *Stand on thy feet* therefore, saith Christ, and be in a readinesse, to execute what I command.

The words being opened, now take the observations.

Observ. 1. That the Lord Christ is full of bowels and compassions, *Ezekiel* was fallen down upon his face, the glory of the Vision, and greatnesse of him that sate upon the Throne had conquered and fell'd this our Prophet to the earth, and there he lay as a man wounded, and without strength, but Christ leaves him not in this condition, but speaks, and that kindly to him: *Son of man, stand upon thy feet*; he is affected with his infirmity, sensible of his fears and troubles: the man that fell among thieves going from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, being plundred and wounded, found no pity from the Priest & Levite, but much from the good *Samaritane*, when he saw him, he had compassion on him, he went to him, bound up his wounds, put in oyle and wine, set him upon his own beast, was content to go on foot by him, brought him to an Inn, and took care of him, and paid for his cure, *Luk. 10. 33, 34, 35.* This *Samaritane* was Christ, who pitied *Adam*, and in him man-kinde, that went from *Jerusalem*, the state of perfection, to *Jericho*, a state of change; for, as *Chemnit.* observes, *Jericho* signifies the Moon, and so a changeable condition; the *Priest* and *Levite* notes the Law, with all its additaments, they passed by, and never reached or healed the wounded soul of man, but Christ the *Samaritane*, with the grace of the Gospel, and blood of the Covenant, with that oyle and wine, cured man, brought him upon his own shoulders to the Church, to *Jerusalem* again, and there took care for him; we have not a legall high Priest which is without bowels, and can do little for us, but we have an Evangelicall high Priest, full of bowels and mercy, such an one as is touched with our in-

firmities, *Heb. 4. 15.* which should encourage us with boldnesse to come unto his Throne, which is a Throne of grace & compasſion.

2. That thoſe are humble and ſmitten down with ſenſe of their own vileneſſe, weakneſſe or worthleſſeſſe, through the ſight of glory and greatneſſe, Chriſt quickly raiſes to comfort again: our Prophet was down in the end of the former Chapter, and in the beginning of this he is up again. The humbling from the ſight of God, his glory, and greatneſſe, is the moſt effectually humbling, & the moſt ſpeedy, effectually and ſweeteſt comfort doth follow it. *Job*, after he had ſeen God, and humbled himſelf; thereupon his captivity is turned, his comforts multiplied, *Job 42. 5, 6. 10. 12.* So *Iſaiah*, being humbled upon the ſight of glory, preſently a Seraphim comforts him, touches his lips with a coal from the Altar, and ſaith, *Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy ſin is purged: Daniel* was humbled for his own ſins, the ſins of his fore-fathers, and the afflictions of the Church, *Dan. 9.* and the Lord ſent *Gabriel* to comfort him, who told him, *he was a man greatly beloved*, and that *he came to give him ſkill and underſtanding*, ver. 22, 23. God doth not humble and throw down his to leave them, but reaches out a hand to raiſe them.

3. That man carries about him principles of humiliation; he is the Son of man, the ſon of the earth, *Iſa. 31. 3.* The *Egyptians* are men, and not God, *Adam velo el*, they are weak and worthleſſe things, and ſo are not only *Egyptians*, but *Iſraelites*, all men, and ſo have no cauſe to be puffed up at all, but great cauſe to be humbled: *Job* call'd corruption his father, and the worm his mother, *Job 17. 14.* you ſee what ſtock and kindred *Job* came of, and we are all of the ſame houſe, therefore afterward in the 25. *Cha. v. 6.* It's ſaid, man, and the Son of man, is a worm, and ſo *David*, *I am a worm, and no man*, *Pſal. 22. 6. velo Iſh*, he was enoſh, ſorry, ſinfull, miſerable man: he was *Adam*, an earthly man, but not *Iſh*, a man of worth, ſtrength, a worm, ſon of the earth, weak, contemptible. *Coniah*, *Jer. 22. 28.* in the vulgar is called *vas fictile*, an earthen veſſell, a broken Idol, or a veſſell in which is no pleaſure, and then followes: *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord*, Princes, Priests, and People, he calls them all earth, to minde them of their mean originall, to bring down their ſpirits, to make them ſenſible of their weakneſſe and condition thy were haſtning unto,

Iſai. 40.

Isai. 40. 6. All flesh is grasse, and all the goodlinesse thereof is as the flower of the field, grasse withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grasse.

4. That the command of Christ is powerfull; *Stand upon thy feet*, saith he, and it proved efficacious; let Christ speak, and the thing is done, *By him were all things made*, Joh. 1. 3. he said, *Let there be light, and there was light*, he said, *Let there be an earth, and let it bring forth, and it was so*; he call'd forth things that were not, and gave them a being; under the Gospel, how powerfull were his commands: he bade Devils depart the possessed, and they did so; he bade the winds and waves be still, and they were so; he called *Lazarus* out of the grave, and he came forth presently: there is infinite power in Christ, and great, yea, oft exceeding great vertue goes forth with his commands: he said to the Fisher-men that were strangers to him, *Follow me, and they left all, and followed him.*

5. That the Lord loves to encourage man to his duty; he saith not here, *stand upon thy feet only*, which might have sufficed, but he makes him a promise; *and I will speak with thee*, I that am upon the Throne, compassed with glory, that have the rule of all the world in my hand, I will speak with thee: here was singular encouragement to this duty, and so to other duties: it's mans duty to walk uprightly, and to encourage unto it: the Word saith, *No good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly*, Psa. 84. 11. It's our duty to believe, and did not Christ tell *Martha* in a particular case, that if she would believe, she should see the glory of God, Joh. 11. 40. And told he not another, that all things are possible to him that believeth? *Mar. 9. 23.* So Christ is lifted up, that *whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life*, Joh. 3. 14, 15. So for prayer, it's our duty; but see what encouragement, *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*, Psa. 81. 10. and, *whosoever you shall aske the Father in my name, he will give it you*, Joh. 16. 23. To preserve and overcome is our duty, and see *Rev. 21. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son*; to give alms is mans duty, as *Luke 6. 38. Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosome.*

6. That the word of Christ is a sweet comfort to a soul troubled; *Stand upon thy feet, and I will speak to thee*, thou art amazed, cast down, but my word will revive thee, put life and spirits into thee: What a comforting word is that of Christs, *Matth 11. Come unto me, ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you*: and *Joh. 6. 37. Him that cometh unto me, I cast out in no wise*? Christ had the words of *eternall life*, verse 68. and those must needs be sweet and acceptable to afflicted spirits, and these words he hath given us in the Gospel, which is glad tidings, the savour of life, the power of God to salvation.

VER. 2.

And the Spirit entred into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

THe Prophet being confirmed by the word of Christ in the foregoing verse, here he is comforted and confirmed by the Spirit also. What is meant by the *Spirit*, must be opened; some have conceived, that when our Prophet fell upon his face at the sight of him and his glory that sate upon the Throne, his spirit left him, and he lay for dead, and so here by *Spirit*, to be understood his soul, or spirit, returned, entred, revived him, and set him upon his feet; but this interpretation we cannot admit for three Reasons.

1. We never read that ever any were stricken dead when God appeared unto them in Visions; the utmost we finde is that of *Daniel, Chap. 10. ver. 17. Neither was there breath left in me*, through feare, he was as a man out of breath, but not without a soul, he had a deadly feare, but was not dead.

2. The Text it self confutes that opinion; for, in the last words of the former Chapter it's said, *I heard a voyce of one that spake*; if *Ezekiel* had been spiritlesse, soulelesse, when he fell upon his face, it had been impossible for him to have heard a voyce.

3. Had it been the return of his own spirit, the words would not have been, *he set me upon my feet*, but I arose; we must therefore leave that interpretation.

2. By *Spirit*, some understand an Angel, and their reason for it, is because it's said, *He set me upon my feet*; the Prophet being among Angels, and they seeing him down, one lifted him up, and set him upon his feet; but this interpretation, although it be *Piscators*, I cannot commend unto you: for,

First, how could any of these Angels that had faces, bodies, wings and feet, enter into the Prophet? for here it's said, *The Spirit entred into me*.

Secondly, if it had been an Angel, the words must have run thus, rather than as they do; one of the *Spirits*, one of the *Angels* entred into me, and not the *Spirit*.

By *Spirit* then understand, that Spirit which was in the living creatures, and in the wheels, *Chap. 1. 20. Even the eternall Spirit of God*; and of this judgement is *Jerome, Gregory, Calvin, Junius, Maldonate, &c.* If their testimonies suffice not, take the testimony of Scripture, *Chap. 3. 24. Then the Spirit entred into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said, Goe, shut thy selfe within thy house, &c.* Here the Prophet repeating the same words, sheweth, that it was the Spirit of God he spake of, and neither Angel, nor his own spirit. The meaning is this: when Christ spake unto me, and I heard his voyce, presently I felt divine vertue, the *Spirit* seised upon, *entred into me*, comforted and confirmed me, set me upon my feet, and fitted me to heare the voyce of that gloridus Person sate upon the Throne.

Two things fall into consideration here, touching the *Spirit*:

The first is, the *Spirits* entrance into him.

The second, the *Spirits* setting him upon his feet.

1. *It entred into him*; there be phrases in Scripture concerning the *Spirit*, which import motion of it from place to place, but must not be so understood.

1. The sending of the *Spirit*, *Gal. 4. 6.*
2. The coming of the *Spirit*, *Joh. 15. 26.*
3. The descending of the *Spirit*, *Joh. 1. 32.*
4. Receiving of it, *Joh. 20. 22.*
5. The entring of the *Spirit*.

These all seem to imply the moving of the Spirit from one place to another; but the Spirit of God is infinite in essence, filling heaven and earth, & changes not place; the thing aimed at in them, is:

1. Opera-

1. Operation.

2. Manifestation.

3. Impletion. When the Spirit works effectually in any, manifests it self by any, fills the heart of any with divine graces and influences; when it doth either of these, or all these, then it's sent, descended, come, received, entred. But for the phrase here, *The Spirit entred into me*, a like one is in *Hab. 3. 16. Rottenesse entred into my bones*, that is, it came not *ab extra*, but there was a disposition and principle in him before to rottenesse; but now it wrought, it manifested it self, and filled him with it: so here, the Spirit was in the Prophet before, but now there was a more lively operation and manifestation of it: yea, farther, this entrance of Spirit, notes out his filling with the Spirit, it possessed him fully, there was abundance of the Spirit in him, to fit him for, and confirm him in his Propheticall Function. *The Spirit entred into him*, took him up, and singled him out for divine service.

2. It set him upon his feet; here the efficacious operation of the Spirit appears; that which nature could not do, the Spirit did, it chased away all distempering fears, inabled him to stand up, to behold glory, to heare the King speak from his Throne of glory, and to be ready to do his will, what ever he should say; this was a great work of the Spirit in our Prophet.

Observ. 1. From the Prophets being down, and set up by the Spirit, that the Spirit is the chief comforter; the words of Christ, *Stand up, and I will speak unto thee*, were good and comfortable words, but the Spirit wrought the solid & lively comfort, which scattered the clouds of feare, confirmed him, and set him up: To speak good words to one sick in prison, is a comfortable thing; but to heal the sick party, to bring out the prisoner is reall comfort; thus did the Spirit, it healed the sick heart of the Prophet, & freed him, being imprisoned with fears; the reall and choyce comfort is from the Spirit: hence the Spirit is called the Comforter in *John* four times, *Joh. 14. 16. 26. Ch. 15. 26. and Ch. 16. 7.* and not only the Comforter, but the Comforter that testifies of Christ, that teacheth all things, that abides with you for ever, as appeares in the places before mentioned. Men comfort, the Word comforts, Angels comfort; it was an Angel comforted Christ in his Agony, *Luk. 22. 43.* but none comfort like the Spirit: *Ezekiel* had the Spirit of God, the

the great and solid Comforter, to raise, confirme and comfort him.

2. That those the Lord Christ intends to set up for Officers in his Church, he gives his *Spirit* unto, the *Spirit* enters into *Ezekiel* before he is called, he is filled with the *Spirit*, the gifts and graces of it. When Officers of an inferiour nature were to be made in the Apostles dayes, even officers to serve tables, what men must be looked out? men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdome, they must be such as the Holy Ghost hath entred into and filled, else they were unfit for that service, *Act. 6. 3.* much more then should they be fill'd with the *Spirit*, that are for the highest place in the Church of God, *Act. 9. 17.* *Saul* was fill'd with the Holy Ghost, *Act. 11. 24.* it's said of *Barnabas*, he was full of the Holy Ghost, the *Spirit* entred into them and they preached, *Act. 13. 2.* They must be separated for the work whereunto the Lord had call'd them, even for the chiefe places in the Church of God; the Offices in the Church, are for men that have the Spirit of Christ in them, in some fulnesse of it; those places are not for others, such as are fill'd with wine, with the world, with a spirit of envie, error, contention, and Antichristianisme, but have not the Spirit of Christ in them: the false and lying Prophets had no entrance of the *Spirit* into them, and therefore the Lord saith, he sent them not, *Ier. 14. 14.* They flattered themselves they were call'd and sent of God, and had the *Spirit*, as *Zedekiah* said to *Micaiah*, Which way went the *Spirit* from me to thee? *1 King. 22. 24.* but they neither had it, nor were sent of God, but ran, and were not sent, *Ier. 23. 21.* And unlesse men have the *Spirit* enter into them, they are neither fit for that Function, nor satisfyingly know they are call'd to it; many among us are called of men, that were never call'd of God.

3. That man by his naturall abilities cannot reach or receive the things of God: *Ezekiel* must have the *Spirit* enter into him, before he can hear or understand any thing to purpose: reason and discourse is not more above the capacity of a Beast, then the things of Christ and his *Spirit* are above the capacity of man, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* The naturall man receives not the things of the *Spirit* of God, for they are foolishnes unto him; the preaching of the Gospel and Christ crucified, was a stumbling-block to the Jewes, and foolish-

*Verba audit,
spiritualm
sensum non
assequitur.*

foolishnesse to the *Greeks*; the *Jews* were skill'd in the Law, and the *Greeks* in Philosophy; and neither of them entertain Christ or his Gospel, their knowledge and abilities served them to take offence at Christ, and to condemn the Gospel for foolishnesse: and it's not all that naturall abilities do, not only not reach the things of the *Spirit*, but they cannot do it, neither can he know them, saith the Text; for they are spiritually discerned. Tell a naturall man, that God hath begotten a Son, that God is man, that a Virgin hath brought forth, that God hath purchased a Church by his blood, that men are reconciled unto God, and justified by the death of Christ, they are riddles unto him; such truths are like a sealed book, the *Spirit* and life of them he is incapable of: tell him that a man must deny himself, mourn for his sins, walk in the *Spirit*, believe in another for salvation, and these things are foolishnesse unto him.

4. That the Word without the *Spirit* is inefficacious, when he spake, the *Spirit* entred, had not there been entrance of the *Spirit*, the Word had not prevail'd, the Prophet had not been raised; the Word is of little moment and power, unlesse the efficacy of the *Spirit* be in it, if it be not quickned by the *Spirit*, it is a dead letter. Many thousands heare the Word, who are fallen by *Adams* and their own sin, but they are not set upon their feet, as our Prophet was, and the principall reason is, the *Spirit* enters not into them, it may stand and knock at the door, but hath not entrance, & therefore they are not lifted up out of their unbelief, and other corruptions: they are not removed from the Wilderness to *Canaan*, from the state of nature, to the state of grace: when therefore you find such expressions in Scripture, as that the Word is, *incorruptible seed*, 1 Pet. 1. 23. *a burning fire*, Jer. 20. 9. *the power of God to salvation*, Rom. 1. 16. *the Word of life*, Phil. 2. 16. that it's quick, powerfull, sharper then any two edged sword, piercing, to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, &c. Heb. 4. that it is *converting the soul*, Psa. 19. 7. *The grace of God that brings salvation*, Tit. 2. 11. These, and such like phrases, you must understand, not exclusively, as if the word were, and did so without the *Spirit*, but conjunctively, when the *Spirit* enters together with the Word, then it is so; the efficacy is not in *sonitu ipso*, but proceeds *ab arcano Spiritus instinctu*, all the vertue & operation is
in

in the power of the *Spirit*, neither is the Word uselesse, it's the Medium by which the *Spirit* works. God is the father of Lights, yet is not the Son uselesse, by it he enlightens us.

5. That the Word is the Chariot of the *Spirit*: when he spake, *Joh 7. 37, 38*, the *Spirit* entred into me, together with the Word of Christ went *39*. the *Spirit*; that is *vehiculum spiritus*, *Joh. 20. 22*. Christ breathed upon them, and that breath conveyed the Holy Ghost unto the Disciples; so it's the Word that carries the *Spirit* to men: by the dispensation of the Word, the *Spirit* is conveyed to our souls; hence the Gospel is call'd the *ministration of the Spirit*, *2 Cor. 3. 8*, and the Ministers of the Gospel, the *Ministers of the Spirit*, ver. 6. The Law which was from Mount *Sinai*, the Apostle calls a dead, a killing letter; but the Gospel which came out of Mount *Sion*, he calls the *Spirit*, or ministration of it; and therefore more fully in *Gal 3. 2*. he saith, *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing of faith?* not by the works of the Law, that was the ministration of death, but by the Gospel, that was the *ministration of the Spirit*: so that the word of Christ transports the *Spirit* over to the hearts of those that believe; and if search should be made, whether the *Spirit* do always accompany the Word of Christ, preached unto the sons of men, some inferiour degrees & works of it may be allowed to go along with the Word: *Act. 7. 51. Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart & eares, ye do alwayes resist the Holy Ghost*, and *Heb. 6. 4. They were made partakers of the Holy Ghost*; there was something of the *Spirit* in the Word, when it was preached unto these two sorts of Hearers, the one resisted the *Spirit*, in the Ordinance, the other received the common gifts of it; some weak operations of the *Spirit* may be yeelded alwayes, to attend the Word, but effectually and powerfull do not: the beams of the Sun are oblique and direct; where oblique, they produce weak effects, where direct, strong ones, and so the operations of the *Spirit* are oblique towards all reprobates, and the work is ineffectually on them, but direct upon the Elect, and so strong, efficacious, *1 Thes. 1. 5. Our Word came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost*, Chap. 2. v. 13. it wrought effectually in them.

6. What God commands his, he gives them strength to do it; *Stand upon thy feet*, saith Christ, *verse 1.* there is the command, & the *Spirit* entred; and *set him upon his feet*; there is the strength

G g

given,

Divina vox
jacenti Pro-
pheta jussit,
ut resurgeret,
sed surgere om-
nino non possit,
nisi in hunc
omnipotentis
Dei spiritus
introsset, quia
ex omnipoten-
tis Dei gratia
ad bona opera
conari quidem
possumus, sed
hec implere
non possumus,
si ipse nos ad-
juvet, qui in-
bet, Greg.
Rom 9. in
Ez 4.

given, to fulfill the command. Commands import power and free-will in us, say the adversaries of free-grace; we say no, let them stand upon free-will and their own strength, we will stand to free Grace; *Ezekiel* cannot stand upon his feet till the Spirit set him up, much lesse can he tread in the wayes of holinesse, and walk in them, being commanded, the word of Christ did it not, his own will did it not, naturall reason and strength did it not, but the Spirit given did it: *Without me you can do nothing*, Joh. 15. not much, not something, not a little, doth he say, but nothing: when Christ commands therefore, he gives power to do; he bids *Lazarus* come forth of the grave, he had neither will nor power to do it, but Christ he gave Spirit and power to do it. When he bid Sinners believe, repent, walk in the Spirit, &c. he gives power to do so; he doth it for them: *Dent. 10. 16.* they are commanded to circumcise the fore-skin of their hearts; and *Dent. 6. 5.* to love the Lord with all their hearts; these they could not do, but God promises to doe them for them, *Dent. 30. 6.* The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love him with all thine heart, and all thy soul; we are commanded to feare the Lord, *Psal. 22. 23.* Feare him, all the seed of Israel; and *Jer. 32. 40.* I will put my feare in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me: We are bid to make us new hearts, and new spirits, *Ezek. 18. 31.* and *Isa. 1. 16.* to wash us, and make us clean; and see what sweet promises are made, *Ezek. 36. 25, 26.* I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthinesse, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; yea, I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Statutes and do them: Verse 27. We are bid believe and trust in God, oft in Scripture: and *Ephes. 2. 8.* we finde Faith is the gift of God; and *Mat. 12. 21.* In his name shall the Gentiles trust; and *Phil. 1. 29.* To you it is given to beleieve; Christ bid the Apostles to go and preach the Gospel to all Nations, *Mat. 28. 19.* how could they, being not languaged do it? they might have said, it's an impossible thing; but *Acts 2. 4.* They were filled with the Spirit, and every man heard them speak in his own language: when God commands therefore, we must not look at

at abilities, as *Arminians* and *Papists* do, nor disabilities, as *fundry Christians* do, but looke out some promises made of such things as are commanded : see free Grace, and draw strength from thence, through the promise, to enable us to stand upon our feet being down, to walk being up, and to persevere in the walking.

7. It is the Spirit of God that inables to discern the things of God, and assures our spirits of the truth and reality of them ; the Spirit entred into the Prophet, set him upon his feet, that he heard him that spake unto him ; now having the Spirit, he was fitted to heare Christ, inabled to judge of what he spake, to satisfie his soul concerning the truth, reality and excellency of his Doctrine, *Joh. 10. 27. My sheep heare my voyce, and a stranger will they not follow ;* Verse 5. they can distinguish between the voyce of Christ, and all others ; and how come they to do it ? they are Sheep, not Goats, not Wolves, not Foxes ; and how come they to be Sheep ? Christ powres out his Spirit upon them, that enters into them, and brings them into the fold, and inables them to heare and know the Shepherds voyce, and the Shepherd himself, *1 Cor. 2. 12. We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* If the Apostle had not had the Spirit, and the Spirit of God, he could not have apprehended the things of Christ and the Gospel ; they are such deep and spirituall things, that none but the Spirit of God can search out or discover, being searched out, into whom the Spirit enters spiritualizing his heart and head, he is a man fit to trade with Christ, and to heare him speake : for, Verse 15. the spirit-man judgeth all things, he hath a principle within, to taste and discern the nature of them, he only hath a fitnesse, though not a fulnesse to judge : he hath a discerning faculty, and according to the measure of that he judgeth. Πνευματις διακρίνει.

V E R. 3, 4, 5.

3. *And he said unto me; Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation, that hath rebelled against me; they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.*
 4. *For they are impudent children, and stiff-necked: I do send thee unto them, & then shalt say unto them: Thus saith the Lord God.*
 5. *And they, whether they will heare, or whether they will forbear (for they are a rebellious house) yet shall know, that there hath been a Prophet among them.*

Ezekiel being raised, comforted, and fill'd with the Spirit, fitted to heare the Lord Christ, and to do him service.

In these verses we have his Call to his Office, and the parties specified he is sent unto, and the reason of his sending to them.

His Call, in these words; *I send thee.*

The parties he is sent unto, are *the children of Israel*; who are described to be:

First, *a rebellious nation*; and this their sin is amplified three wayes:

1. *It's against me.*
 2. *It's the same evill their fathers have done; they transgressed against me, and so have their children.*
 3. *It's continued; to this day.*
- Secondly, *impudent children.*
 Thirdly, *stiff-necked.*
 Fourthly, *a rebellious house.*

The reason of his sending is; *that they might know there hath been a Prophet among them.*

I shall first open the words of this third verse; and after give you the Observations.

I send thee.

שולח *missens*

In the Hebrew it is, *I am sending thee*, or, *about to send thee*; the present tense in the Scripture, noteth the purpose and firm resolution of the mind, *Luk. 19. 8.* saith *Zachens*, *the half of my goods I give to the poor*, that is, *I purpose and decree to give them*; it's the

firm

firm resolution of my minde: but it notes more here, *I send thee*, I intend and am resolved to make thee a Prophet, that is not all: I ordain, constitute thee to be a Prophet; for *mitto* here, *non propositum mittentis, nec motum missi, sed auctoritatem significat*; and that will appear from *Jer. 14. 14. The Prophets prophesie iies in my Name*, they pretend, saith God, that they have commission and countenance from me, but I sent them not, I never intended or constituted them to be Prophets, they never had authority from me, I commanded them not, neither spake unto them, they went of their own heads, for their own ends; and if they be Prophets, they are lying ones, my authority did never establish them, but it shall punish them.

Children of Israel.

That is, the *Jewes*, that were brought into *Babylon*, who were call'd the children of *Israel*, from *Jacob*, who wrestling with God & prevailing, had his name changed from *Jacob* to *Israel*, *Gen. 32. 28. Thy name shall be no more Jacob but Israel, for as a Prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed*. Not *Israel*, because he hath seen God, as some interpret it, nor *Israel* because he was a man right with God, but *Israel* is of a word signifies to rule, with the addition of *el* to it, and so it follows in the verse, because thou hast prevailed with God; here was a good root, but the branches were degenerate, the sons of *Israel* were not like their father *Israel*, a praying and prevailing people; sons of *Israel*, according to the flesh, externall shews, and in opinion, so the most of them were, but they did not follow the faith and purity of their father *Israel*: *Rom. 9. 6. They are not all Israel that are of Israel*.

אִישׁ
רוּחָא
יִשְׂרָאֵל
דְּמִינָרִי
יִשְׂרָאֵל
כִּי שְׂרִיחַ
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אֱלֹהִים

A rebellious Nation.

The word for Nation is in the plurall number, *Goiim*, which word is mostly in Scripture applied to the unbelieving *Gentiles*, those that were without God, and strangers to the commonwealth of *Israel*, as *Hab. 1. 5. The Heathens*; and *Psal. 106. 42. He gave them into the hand of the Heathens*; it s *Goiim*: the *Septuagint* renders it, *Into the hands of their enemies*: so the *Jews* accounted the *Gentiles*, & in disgrace call'd them *Goiim*, an abominable Nation; and at this day they call the *Christians* so, and make that name which

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which was common before to all *Gentiles*, now since Christ, to be speciall to *Christians*. The *Turks*, they call *Ishmaelites* and *Aethiopians Cushites*, but the *Christians* *Goiim*, an abominable Nation; and here the Spirit of God calls them *Goiim*, a rebellious Nation, by way of contempt: The Prophet prophesied against the *Syrians*, *Egyptians*, *Babylonians*, and others, which in common sense of the word, were the Nations: but here it's put upon the *Jewes*, who were as vile in the eyes of God as the *Gentiles* were in theirs; for they had forsaken the truth, entertained their Idolatries and corruptions, and turned aside, to notorious wickednesses, something of most Nations about them, they had taken in, and so are call'd *Goiim*, Nations, as if they had had the wickedness of all the nations, or because they were divided in their false and Idolatrous worship, some were for the *Ammonitish* way, some the *Moabitish*, some for other wayes, most for wrong wayes, and this made them like the Nations, who had their severall wayes, and to deserve the brand of *Goiim*.

Rebellious, Hammordim, the rebellious ones of *Marod*, which signifies to fall off, to apostatize, to rebell and resist; it's like the practice of men, against States and Princes, when they have made Lawes for their Subjects to live by, and they have accepted of those Lawes, and then fall off, with-draw from their subjection, obedience, and shake off their yoke; it's call'd rebellion, Gen. 14. 4. the King served *Kedorlaomer* twelve yeers, and in the thirteenth rebelled, that is, shook off those Lawes and yokes they were under.

In the Law sense rebellion is a traiterous taking up arms against the State, be it by the natural Subjects, or by others formerly subdued, or by whomsoever, when arms are taken up to overthrow the settled Lawes of a Kingdom and Religion settled by those Lawes, this is rebellion against that State, and that State may preserve it self, the Law of Nature, Reason, and Religion warranting the same. I am not to speak of rebellion in this sense, but Theologically, when men will not be under the Laws and Government of Christ, but go a whoring after their own lusts and inventions, or others, then they rebell; so the other Tribes told *Reuben*. *Gad*, and *Manasseh*: Josh. 22. 16. *What trespass is this you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord, in that you have builded you an Altar, that ye might rebel* this

*Ad nefaria
foelera.*

this day against the Lord? Turning from God, and taking up our own or other inventions, is rebelling against God.

The Vulgar hath it, to the apostatizing Nations, and the Septuagint renders the word *Rebell* in *Nehem. 6.6.* to apostatize, *thou apostatizes.* and the Jewes think to apostatize; and apostasie is a wicked departing from God. and his truth, acknowledged and confessed, to false wayes of worship: and such were the *Israelites* at this time, they had left the God of *Israel*, and chosen other gods, and served Idols, which made the Lord to say, *Jer. 2. 11.* *Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory;* such is the apostasie of *Antichrist* and his followers, they have departed from the true God and his worship, and set up false gods, and false worship; so that he and all his children are *Goiim Hammordim*, a rebellious, an apostatizing nation.

Against me.

It's not against their King, their high Priest, but *against me*, against my Covenant, saith *Jerome*, God had made a Covenant with them, not only a spousall covenant, *I will betroth thee to me for ever*, *Hof. 2. 19.* But a matrimoniall covenant, *I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other gods before me*, *Exod. 20. 2, 3.* God said, he would have them, and no other people to be his; God kept the Covenant on his part, and was no *Polygamist* to that day, he took not in any other nation, but they brake with him, and took in other gods, and brought them not into the City only, but into the Temple, and provoked their God to jealousy.

Even to this day.

The Hebrew is, to the body, strength, essence of this day, even this self-same day: these very words you have in *Lev. 23. 14.* *untill the self-same day*, had not this people bin brutish, they might have seen what an unprofitable thing it was to bestow honour upon Altars, Idols, to set up corrupt, invented worship, they might have seen what truth and force was in Propheticall threats, how powerful God was to save and to destroy; for now they were carried out of their own Countrey, they were in *Babylon*, a most Idolatrous place, subject to the nations they so disdained, and had been some yeers in bondage; yet even here, to that present time, they were

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היום הזה

were addicted to their old wayes, and served false gods, night and day. *Jer.* 16. 13.

Transgresse.

וַשָּׁב

אֲדוֹתַי אֶל מִי
נִכְלָתָאֵם.

The Hebrew word signifies, *to sin*, not ignorantly, or of infirmity, but wilfully, *ex superbia*: *Iſa.* 1. 2. *I have brought up children, and they have rebelled*; it's the same word is in the Text, *they have proudly, voluntarily sinned against me*; the *Septuagint* therefore render it, *They have prevaricated with me, rejected me, they have taken me out of the way, who was established to be their God, and have willingly brought in other gods*; and this word *Pashagn*, is of larger extent then *marad*, say *Rabbies*, but in Scripture they are promiscuously used: *Hof.* 14. 9. *the transgressors shall fall therein*; those go from under the command of God, and oppose him.

Observ. 1. That it's Christs prerogative to set up and send officers unto the Church; *I send thee*, I that sit upon the Throne, that am *Jebovah*, that know things to come, that have all power in mine hand, that can save and destroy, that am the great Prophet of my people, *I send thee*: So *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. Christ is invested with all power, and therefore sends Officers to all nations, *Eph.* 4. 11. He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers: it was Christ gave them, & set them up in the Church. Hence saith the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 4. 1. *Let a man so account of us as the Ministers of Christ*, we are set up and sent by him, who is the head of the Church, the Author of all Offices, and Lord of all Officers. Hence follows:

1. That those Offices and Officers, are holy and warrantable, which depend upon the will and authority of Christ, not those are of the wills and authority of men, as are all in the *Romish Synagogue*, and too many are amongst us, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, they were of Christ, but being extraordinary, are ceased; Pastors, Teachers, Elders, Deacons, Christ hath given to be standing Officers in the Church, and their callings we acknowledge holy and lawfull, but all others of humane institution, and so unholy and unwholsome for the Church. The *Papists* deny the calling of Pastors and Teachers in the reformed Churches to be lawfull, because they are not sent by the *Pope*, and ordained by his Bishops, and so in succession from Christ; but it's cleer, that

Pastors

Pastors and Teachers were given of Christ, before ever *Popes* or *Prelates* were thought on, *Ephes.* 4. 11. And as for them, the *Pope* and his *Clergie*, we may safely say, that neither himself, nor any of his *Hierarchy*, ever had any lawfull calling, because none of them are sent of Christ, he will never own it, that he sent any of them, neither were they ordained according to the will of Christ and his *Apostles*.

2. That men unable and unhoneft, in the Offices of the Church, if set up by him, were never sent by him; he gives gifts and graces to men, and then sends them; the *Spirit* entred into *Ezekiel*, and then, *I send thee*. He hath the power of sending, it depends on his will, and that is sacred, he would not put in an insufficient or corrupt man upon any terms, and therefore he hath set rules and lawes to shew what men he would have in those holy Functions, he hath given precedents of his own choosing: *Rom.* 1. 5. *By whom we received Grace and Apostleship*, first *Grace*, and then *Apostleship*, *1 Cor.* 3. 6. *Who hath made us able Ministers of the new Testament*. The Lord Christs Ministers are able, not onlv in parts, but chiefly in the Spirit, that is light and life in them, such he sends, such he approves; and as for ignorant and evill ones, see what the Lord saith, *Hos.* 4. 6. *Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me*; Christ would not have a prophane ignorant man to be in that Calling.

3. That those are sent of Christ may not delegate their power, and execute the office by others, but must do it themselves; the Prophet might not appoint another, being sent of Christ to the children of *Israel*; *I send thee*, and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord; Ambassadors are themselves to deliver their messages, and not others for them, or in their stead; Ministers are Ambassadors, and *2 Cor.* 5. 20. for Christ, and do preach and pray in Christs stead, who is their Head and Lord, whereupon, saith *Paul*, *Wo unto me, if I preach not the Gospel*, *1 Cor.* 9. 16. And what's the ground of it? *Verf.* 17. *The dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me*; I am commanded to do it, I may not, I dare not commit or delegate this trust, this power to others. Delegation is *actus imperii*, an act of power, and all the Officers of the Church must be obsequious, not imperious, therefore Hierarchists and those that substitute others to preach in their stead, usurpe

the power of Christ, to whom it belongs to delegate men to preach in his stead, and over thousands of Churches, if he please.

4. That those Christ sends and sets over people, are by divine institution, *I send thee to the children of Israel*, he was not a Prophet to others, but unto them, and that by divine authority, *Act. 20. 28. Take heed unto all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you over-seers*; this was the Church of Ephesus, and the Elders of it were set there by no lesse authority then that of the Holy Ghost, the Office, Power, Jurisdiction over such a people is not humane, arbitrary, *ad placitum*, but of divine institution.

2. That many are call'd, and seem to be *Israelites*, which in truth are not: the *Jewes* were call'd the children of *Israel* here, and were so, according to the flesh, but they were not so in the Spirit; they had not the principles of *Jacob* in them; they walked not in his steps; they had his name, but not his faith, they were call'd *Israelites*, but were not true *Israelites*, *Rom. 9. 6. they are not all Israel that are of Israel*, in the true sense of the Scripture, *they are not all Israel*; that is, spirituall, such as *Jacob* was, men of Prayer, wrestling with God, prevailing like Princes, but they are of *Israel* according to the flesh; and fleshly *Israelites*, to whom the promises pertained not in *Matth. 8. 12. they are called children of the kingdom*, but yet such as should be cast out into utter darknesse; they thought themselves safe in being called so, and conceiting themselves such, but they were deluded: and so now many thousands think themselves *Christians*, *Saints*, when in truth they are nothing lesse, the very contrary, enemies to true *Christians* and *Saints*. The *Papists* boast that they are *Catholiques*, *Christians*, the Church of God; but it's in no better sense then these rebellious *Jewes* are termed the children of *Israel*. What are titles, when truth is wanting? no other then a kinde of blaspheming, *Rev. 2. 9. I know the blasphemy of them, that say they are Jewes and are not*; they were *Jews* by name, and did reproach the *Christians*, and the Lord Christ, but were not *Jewes* in truth; *Rom. 2. 28, 29. He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, in circumcision of the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, whose heart is circumcised, and is one in the Spirit*. Now these men saying they are *Jewes*, and were not, did blaspheme, much prejudice and wound the honorable name of being a *Jew*, and what were they? a Synagogue of Satan; and now these

these think, call themselves *Christians* and are not; they blaspheme and wound that honourable name of *Christians*; and so they that call themselves Churches, and are not, they blaspheme, and wrong that honourable name of Church. *Papists* say they are the Church, be it so; it's the Church of Satan, not of Christ, they worship Idols, not Christ, they are *Babel*, not *Beihel*, they have the title, not the substance.

3. That when Gods people degenerate, and fall to sinfull practices, then they lose their glory, and contract reproach; before the *Israelites* fell to Idolatrous courses, and violation of divine Law, they were Gods *Inheritance*, Deut. 4. 20. *his Portion*, D. ut. 32. 9. *his peculiar Treasure*, Exod. 19. 5. *his Strength and his Glory*, Psal. 78. 61. *his anoynted Ones*, Psal. 105. 15. they were so honourable in his account, and precious in his eye, that he suffered none to do them harm; *he rebuked Kings for their sakes*, and he gave *Egypt* a ransome for them, men and people for their life, *Isa.* 43. 3, 4. God thought nothing too deare for them, no titles too good, *a Kingdom of Priests, a holy Nation*, Exod. 19. 6. but when they fell from him, to sinfull and base courses, then their honourable titles are turned into reproachfull and bitter ones; they are called here *Gojim*, prophane, rejected, pollution, *sterquilinum, excrementa mundi*; so the *Jewes* accounted of the *Gentiles*, and so God accounts of them here; they judged so of the *Babylonians*, and God metes out the same measure unto them; in *Prov.* 14. 34. it's said, *Righteousnesse exalts a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any people*, even to Gods own people; it makes them vile, hatefull, abominable to God and man, and brings such terms, as proclaims their shame, *Isa.* 1. 10. God calls them *Rulers of Sodom*, and people of *Gomorrab*, *Isa.* 57. 3. *sons of the Sorceresse, the seed of the Adulterer and Whore, an hypocritical Nation*, *Isa.* 6. 10. *a nation not desired*, *Zeph.* 2. 1. *a thievish Nation*, *Mal.* 3. 9. *the generation of his wrath*, *Jer.* 7. 27. *Loammi, none of my people*, *Hos.* 1.

4. See here the great evil is in Sin, it is Rebellion against God, *1 Sam.* 12. 15. not only great Sins, Idolatry, Murder, &c. but even all sin; it's a casting off God, a withdrawing from his Laws, Commands, Authority: as *Hos.* 4. 12. *They have gone a whoring from under their Gods*, as a wife that is false to her husband will not be kept in, but under the guidance, counsell and power of her husband,

*Viles facit,
Syr.*

band, but will out, follow her Lovers, satisfy her lusts: and so is it with the souls sinning with God, it will out from under the guidance, counsell, command and authority of God; it saith of God in effect, as they in the Gospel said of God, *Wee will not have this man to reign over us, wee will not be under him*; and Sinners will not be under God: God commanded *Saul* to smite *Amalek*, to destroy all, and neither spare man nor beast; but *Saul* spared *Agag*, the goodly things, and fat of the beast, and this by intreaty of the people; this might seem no great matter, especially the cattell being spared to sacrifice to the Lord, as they pretended; but see what God saith of it, *1 Sam. 15. 11. It repents mee that I have set up Saul to be King, for he is turned backe from following me; he is apostatized from me: God calls this sin apostasie, and Sam. v. 23. calls it Rebellion; Saul, thou hast rebelled against God; and will you know what a sin Rebellion is? it's as the sin of Witchcraft, and you all know it's abominable, and worthy of death, thy sin is of that malignity, as that by it thou hast rejected God, & for it God hath rejected thee, and thou art a man of death for it: Rebell is an ill name, and here is a King a Rebell against God, and so is every Sinner; for he not only withdraws from under God, but takes up arms against God; bitter, lying, swearing, reproaching words, are call'd arrows and swords, in the 57th Psal. v. 4. and 73. Psal. v. 9. it's said of wicked men; they set their mouths against the heavens, that is, against God in the heavens: and of a proud man it's said, Jam. 4. 6. God resists him; he is in rebellion against God, hath taken up arms against him, and God takes up armes to meet him; it's a military word, God sets himselfe in a military posture against him, Acts 5. 39. those opposed the Apostle, were fighters against God: but there's no hope for Sinners to do good this way, God will prevall, and wound the hairy scalps of his enemies, what ever they be, that go on still in their wickedness. Let us therefore cast down our weapons, and submit to God; rebellion is an odious thing against a State, much more against God: Let us all say, we will not be Rebels but Subjects of the most High; we will be governed by his Lawes, we will be under his Authority, and as they said to *Joshua* 1. 18. let us say to God, Whosoever he be that doth rebell against thy Commandements, and will not hearken to thy word,*

In all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death.

5. That sins about worship are rebellious against Christ, and he takes it hainously; *they have rebelled against me*; it was Christ who sat upon the Sapphirine throne, that spake to the Prophet, that said, *they rebell against me*; and wherein was the rebellion? in casting off his worship, and in corrupting it, when people fall to Idolatrous & false worship, or corrupt the true and pure worship of Christ, by detraction of any part of it, or by additionals and mixtures of their own, then they sin: so about worship, as it's rebellion against Christ; sometimes they fell to flat Idolatry, forsaking the true worship of God, and joyn to *Baal Peor*, *Psal.* 106. 28. sometimes they set up their posts with Gods posts, and brought in their own inventions, and mingled their water with Gods Wine, and the wisdom of their flesh, with the wisdom of Christ; and this he complains of as rebellion against him, and the ground of it is, because Christ was the Head of the Church then, as well as now, and the Law-giver unto them as well as unto us, there was never but one head & one Law-giver to the Church, and when he out of his infinite wisdom hath set a way of worship that will delight the Father himself and his Spirit, for mortal worms of the earth to leave it, to pervert it, to mix their own devices with it; provokes bitterly, and mounts up to the nature of rebellion, and that against Christ; *Psal.* 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way*; what way? in the way of worship especially; that admit not unwarranted worship, nor worship in a wrong manner, but walk in the Law of the Lord.

6. That children usually tread in the paths of their fathers, they and their fathers have transgressed against me; doth the father sin knowingly, wilfully? the children will do so; do they fall off from the true worship of God, imbrace lies, superstition, oppression, whoredome? it's a miracle if their children do not. *Adam* eat the forbidden fruit, & all man-kinde have followed his steps to that tree; the name of a father and his example, are strong traces, to draw the children into their way. We read of some Kings in *Judah*, that left the way of their fathers, but not one of *Israel*, they all followed the steps of *Jeroboam*, the son of *Nebat*, that made *Israel* to sin; let the parents be never so vile, if grace prevent not, the children will walke in their wayes: *Ahab* was
bad

Indebitum cultum, indebito modo.

bad enough, that sold himself to commit wickednesse, and yet *Abaziah* his son is said to walk in his way, in his mothers way, who was *Jezabel*, and in *Jeroboams*, 1 *King*. 22. 52. and if it be possible, they will go beyond their fathers in wickednesse, *Judg*. 2. 19. *They corrupted themselves more then their fathers*. *Jer*. 7. 26. *They did worse then their fathers*. Iniquity improves in the going, like a river, the farther it runs, the broader and deeper it growes: in *Job*. 8. 44. *Christ* tels the *Jewes*, *they were of their father the Devil, and his lusts they will do*; they were such wilfull sinners, sinning against such cleer and strong light, that their sin was devillish. Let parents take heed what they do, how they sin before their children; when they do so, they pave a way to hell for them, and dig the pit for their destruction. *Raboldin*, a Duke of *Fruef-land*, about the 900. yeere of *Christ*, being perswaded to turn *Christian*, and going to be baptiz'd, asked of the Bishop if all his forefathers were damned, who indiscreetly affirming it, saith the Duke, then will I be damned with them, rather then be baptiz'd by thee.

7. Antiquity is not the rule for worship; you and your fathers have transgressed against me; the traditions and examples of forefathers will not warrant the children in point of worship; here they could plead, We did what our forefathers did many hundred yeeres together, and have faithfully walked in their steps, and hope we are unblameable; no, saith *Christ*, *You and your fathers have transgressed, you should not have made their examples, but my Word the rule of worship*. The *Samaritans* could plead antiquity for their worship in Mount *Gerizim*, above 200. yeeres, where they had a Temple, and many things according to *Moses*. And hence was it, that the woman of *Samaria* said to *Christ*, *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain*, *Joh*. 4. 20. but *Christ* told her, v. 22. *Tell worship you know not what*; you have the wile, inventions, and examples of men, for the warrant of your worship and good intentions, in the execution of your worship, but because you have not my Word; that is, not a Light, a Law and Rule unto you in point of your worship; *you worship you know not what*; and your good intentions neither make it acceptable unto God, nor profitable to you: In *Hos*. 11. 12. it's said, *Ephraim compassed me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit, they had their*

their fathers, and antiquity to plead, even from *Jeroboams* dayes; but because they had corrupted the worship of God with their own inventions, the Lord calls all lies and deceit. In point of worship, you must look at divine Lawes, not humane examples; the rust of antiquity will not go for pay with God; mens traditions make ineffectuall his commands: *Matth.* 15. 6. And can they be effectuall Ordinances unto us? if so, we had not been redeemed from them by the blood of Christ: *1 Pet.* 1. 18. he tells them they were redeem'd from their vain conversation by tradition from their fathers, by the precious blood of Christ, and what was that vain conversation? A Jesuite tells us, it was in *Lege Moysi, & Gentilismo*; and are they freed from *Mosis* Law given by God, and *Gentilismo*; the traditions of men? are not wee freed from that vain conversation is in the lawes of Popery and Prelates and traditions of Fathers? yea, we are freed, and that by the blood of Christ, he must be our Antiquity, our Rule, our Law; and what is not after Christ, but after the traditions of men, must be thrown out & troden down as beggerly elements and worldly rudiments; therefore heare Christ (who speaks in this Prophecie) in the 20. *Ezek.* 18, 19. saying, *Walk yee not in the Statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgements, nor defile your selves with them, I am the Lord your God, walk in my Statutes, and keep my judgements, and do them.*

8. A sinfull Nation is not changed by afflictions; they were now in captivity amongst *Babylonians* that were bitter scoffing enemies, that said, *Sing us one of the Songs of Sion*; they were under the wrath of God, put hard to it, for all their necessities, and yet they ceased not their rebellious transgressions against God, *even to this very day*: they had been five yeeres also in this hard condition, and yet continued. Afflictions are invalid to subdue corruptions, or change dispositions: put a stone into the fire, it neither softens it, nor changes it; neither cold nor hot water will make a *Blackmore* white; empty Vineger from vessell to vessell, it will never become Wine; and empty a wicked heart from condition to condition, it will never become gracious; afflictions may cause restraint of corruption, hinder execution of it, stir up naturall principles, and common gifts to act, but never alter a man. But usually wicked men are worse for afflictions; here they sinned against

*Legibus, non
exemplis judi-
candum, vi-
vendum est.*

*A. Lapid.
in locum.*

against God rebelliously in the land of their captivity. Wicked men grow worse and worse every day : *Isa. 1. 5. Why should you be smitten any more? you will revells more and more; the whole head is sick, and the heart is faint, &c.* When sinners are in an ill way through their own corrupt natures, strengthen'd in it by example of their fathers and their own practice, the more blowes they have, the harder they grow, and sin more desperately.

V E R. 4.

For yee are impudent children, and stiff-hearted.

THe words, *impudent children*, are in the Hebrew, *duri facieb*, *hard of face*, their faces were so hard, that reproof and reproach would not make them blush; and therefore it's rendred *impudent*; without shame, without blushing: the face is the seat of shame; and when men sin, and are told of it, or conceive others know it, their faces are oft fill'd with shame; and it's hard for one guiltie to keep shame out of his face; it's hard not to be a traitor to himself; but these were past shame, they had the forehead of an Harlot; they sinned, and were not ashamed. *Jer. 6. 15. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.*

Stiff-hearted.

Robusti corde, strong in heart, or of heart; strong with a full strength, with stubbornness against God: there is a naturall stiffness in men, which they inherite from their forefathers, and bring into the world; and there is a contracted stiffness, gotten by continuance in sin; both these were in this people, and the principle of stubbornness was not broken, but strengthened; so that no threatnings did make them feare, no blowes did make them yeeld; but being stubborn they rebell'd all; no promises, kindnesses did melt them; this sin had been in them even from *Moses* time, *Mat. 19. 8. Moses*, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: The tender love of a wife could not prevail with them.

Obseru. 1.

Observ. 1. That progresse in sin makes impudent; the originall is, and are impudent; they sin to this day, and are impudent, or hard of face: the beginnings of sin are modest, but progresse in sin is shamelesse; in a Harlot are first wanton thoughts, then wanton looks, after waiting for opportunities, and here ye may be blushing; but when it comes to that in *Prov. 7. 13.* *she caught him, shee kissed him, then it's come to shamelesse, and therefore it followed, with an impudent face shee said, I have peace-offerings, I have paid my vowes, God hath had his due, and now my flesh must have its due, I have deckt my bed, come, let us take our fill of love:* The Hebrew for impudent is, *she strengthened her face;* it was strengthened against modestie and shame; for progresse in sin had made her shamelesse of sin: and so the Prophet speaks of the *Jews, Jer. 3. 3.* *Thou hast a whores fore head, thou refusest to be ashamed;* *Judab* was so impudent, that she scorned to blush, *Jer. 8. 12.* *Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? I looked for it, but they were not ashamed at all, neither could they blush;* O what a condition doth sin bring to! *Monica* the mother of *Austin*, at first sipped a little wine, after drank off a little more, in time whole cup, and at last it came to drunkenness, and so to impudencie: when the *Calves* were first mentioned in *Israel*, the people trembled at it, but afterwards they could kisse *Calves*, and sacrifice to *Baal*, *Hos. 13. 1.* and out-stand the threats of the Prophet. *Sin* banisheth shame from its habitation; so that the sinner and shame are dis-acquainted: *Psal. 52. 1.* *Why boastest thou thy selfe in mischief, O mighty man? Doeg* boasteth of his bloudiness, that he had kill'd the Priests at the command of *Saul*; *Zeph. 3. 5.* *The unjust knoweth no shame.* Though men foam out their shame, *Jude 13.* and glory in their shame, *Phil. 3. 19.* yet they will know no shame: It's an exceeding evill to be past shame, to be impudent in sinning; if ever God shew mercie to such sinners, they must be ashamed; *What fruit had you in those things, whereof now ye are ashamed?* *Rom. 6. 2 1.* yee were impudent in committing, but now yee are ashamed in confessing and remembring of them.

2. That where there is an impudent face, there is a hard, stiff heart; if the heart were not stony before God, the face would not be impudent before man; *Act. 7. 5 1.* *Yee stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart,* there was brawniness within, & impudency

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with-

Erubescencia est fuga rei indecentis.

Impudence is the contrary: sin is the most indecēt thing, & maxime erubescibile; we blush at the nakednesse of our bodies, not at sinne, which made the nakednesse of the body shamefull.

Quantum displicet Deo immunditia peccati, in tantum placet Deo erubescencia penitentis,
Bernard.

without; and a hard heart is one of the greatest evils; Mercies prevail not, what mercies had they in the Wildernesse, in *Canaan*; and yet they did not move them? Miracles will not do it; when they took Christ, he said, *I am he*, and they all fell backward to the ground, after this, *Peter* cuts off *Malchus* his ear; Christ heals it: here were two miracles, yet they did no good upon their hard hearts; they went on, laid hands on Christ, who wrought the miracles, bound him as a malefactor, and thought to make him sure for doing any more miracle. *Pharaoh* saw ten miracles; the *Israelites* wore a miracle about them; forty years their cloaths & shoes wore not out, they were new at forty years end, yet these wrought not upon their hard hearts. It is not fasting and prayer will do it, many are hardened in them; There be waters, that what ever is cast in, they turn into stone; and some mens hearts grow stony in what ever Ordinances they are. A hard heart is a grievous disease, worse then the stone in the reins or bladder: It was *Nabals* disease and death, and most men are sick and die of that disease.

3. That God sends his Prophets and Ministers about hard services, such as are full of discouragements; when they are look'd upon with a carnall eye: *Ezekiel* had presently to object, Lord, wilt thou send me to a people that is impudent? I shall never make them blush; to a people hard-hearted? I shall never make impression on their spirits, by any truths I shall preach unto them, my labour will be in vain; are they a rebellious nation? do they rebell against thee? and will they not much more rebell against me? this is a hard task; if thou regard'st not me, yet regard thy truths, What shall they be cast away about such a people as this? O spare me, and spare thy truths: No, saith God, *I send thee unto them, and thou shalt speak unto them*; they are hard tasks that God puts his servants upon; *Isaiah* was called to a hard service, Chap. 6. 9, 10. to preach ruine and destruction to a people, and so unwelcome he was, that he saith, Chap. 8. 18. *I am for a sign and wonder in Israel: Jeremiah* is set over Nations and Kingdomes to root out, to pull down, and to destroy, Chap. 1. 10. the Kings of *Judah*, the Princes, Priests, and People he was to deal withall; and vers. 19. it's said, *They shall fight against thee*. Preaching provokes all sorts of men; and so hard did *Jeremiah* find his work, although God pro-

Pliny tells of a river in *Lucania*, that turns leaves and sticks into stones.

Quid est predicare, nisi furorẽ populi in se derivare?
Luth.

promised to be with him, he was so derided, saw so little good come of his labours, that he resolved to lay down his calling, and to speak no more in the name of the Lord, *Jer. 20. 9. Knox*, when called to preach, he burst forth into an abundance of tears, and so withdrew himself to his chamber, and was full of grief, and troubled, till he was compell'd to preach. Preaching is a warring, *2 Tim. 2. 4.* and Preachers are souldiers; hence *Paul* calls *Timothy*, a good souldier of Christ; and when we come to spoil and plunder people of their goods, their lusts, wills, humours, opinions, and to take away their strong holds, their carnall reasoning against Christ in the Gospel, and wayes of God; they are in a rage, take up arms against us. *Paul* fought with Beasts at *Ephesus*, *1 Cor. 15. 32.* and they gored him, and sought his death: The *Galatians* that would have at first pull'd out their eyes for *Paul*, thrust out their tongues against *Paul*; he was their enemy, because he told them the truth; those cryed *Hosannab* a little before, were ready to cry Crucifie, crucifie; hardly a Prophet or an Apostle, but suffered by the hands of their hearers.

4. Ministers should not so much look at the persons they are sent to, or the event of their Ministry, as at their Call: *I send thee*, saith God, look thou to that, trouble not thy self at the persons that are so wicked, nor at the successe of thy Ministry, but consider I have call'd and sent thee; Gods will and command must content us, support us: what if we be scoffed at, reviled, made the off-scouring and filth of the world, yet here is the comfort of a true Prophet, of a true Minister, Christ sent him, and he that set him awork will pay him his wages, whether they hear or hear not to whom he is sent; the Nurse hath her wages, whether the childe live or die; and we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God in them that are saved, and in them that perish: *2 Cor. 2. 15.* The souldier hath his respect and reward, whether he kill men or take them alive; and we are acceptable unto God as well in the deaths as the lives of men. This consideration comforted *Isaiah*, Chap. 49. 4, 5. *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought; yet surely my judgement is with the Lord, and my work with my God; and though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength: He would look at God, and not at the difficulty of the work, or discouragements*

from men, and want of successe; sometimes God gives large encouragement, promises, hope, successe, providing for our infirmities, at other times a bare commission and command must suffice, to do that would make ones heart ake; it's his prerogative to send whom he will, and upon what service he will. Let us lay aside all discouraging thoughts, look to our Call, rest in Gods will, and know it's honour to be in his service, though nothing come of it, we are acceptable to him, if not to men, and shall finde a reward in heaven, if none on earth.

5. That those are sent of God must deliver, not their own, but Gods message; *and thou shalt say unto them*, Thus saith the Lord God: a Prophet is *of Dei*; and it's great honour to him, that the great God will speak by his tongue; *Thou shalt be as my mouth*, Jer. 15. 19. So *Jeremy* had Gods words put in his mouth, Chap. 1. 9. and those he must speak, not his own words, what God commanded that he must speak, and not what himself fancied. When a man comes furnished with the word of God, then he comes as a man of God, with authority and power; this made the Apostle say, *our weapons are not carnall*, not the words of mans wisdom, but the Oracles of God, *which are mighty through God*, Act. 10. he delivered the whole counsell of God, and not his own.

V E R. 5.

And they, whether they will beare, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house) yet shall know, there hath been a Prophet amongst them.

HERE the end or reason of the Prophets sending is given, *I send thee to this people*: to take away all pleas and pretences of theirs, thou shalt prophesie unto them, and tell them of their sins, what I require at thy hands, and if they will not beare, I have not left my selfe without witnesses; *they shall know*, &c. they would otherwise have had to object against thee, and said, if we had had a Prophet in our captivity to have reprov'd us for our sins, to have shewed us Gods displeasure, our danger, and the way to escape, we would have ceased from our evil ways, have learned right-

righteousness, and laid hold of offers of mercy and grace, but we had not to reprove or instruct us, we perished for want of vision. It's true, we had Prophets in our Country, but there they were common, and we did not much regard them, but had one been given us, now in this desolate, afflicted condition, we would have hearkened, obeyed, &c. This objection God takes away, and tells them, whether they will heare or no, a Prophet they shall have, he will not be wanting to them, they shall have no cause to object against, or c. mplain of him.

A rebellious house.

The original is, *a house of rebellion*, it's in the abstract, and notes the strength and provocation of their sin: the Vulgar hath it, *the exasperating house*, the house that provokes and vexes the Lord, or *the imbittering house*, that imbitters God, and so the Septuagint renders that in the third verse, *which have rebelled against me, which have turned me into bitterness, and made me deal bitterly with them*; *A house*, not because God dwelt amongst them, and was now driven out by their Rebellion; but *a house*, because they were the family, and seed of Israel; and this parenthesis is inserted to arm the Prophet against their obstinacy, that he understanding before hand, what they were, might not be despondent, but proceed cheerfully in his work, what ever he met withall.

Observ. 1. That there be few that heare and receive the Word savingly: I send thee to this people, and there be not many among them that will entertain thy message, or believe the word that I put into thy mouth; *Whether they will heare, or forbear, for they are a rebellious house*: this strongly imports they would not heare, not savingly, but rather oppose the truth; there was a great number of them in Babylon, yet very few hearkened to the Prophet, and so was it before they went into Babylon, Isa. 53 *Who hath believed our reports? we have preached, and made report of God and Christ, in the Temple, in the Synagogues, in the gates and streets; but, Who hath believed us? Isaiah was a Princely Prophet, had a Princely language, and yet neither among the great ones at Court, nor inferior sort, was there any considerable number; for Isa. 8. 18. He saith, I and the children the Lord hath given me, are for signs and wonders in Israel; if they had been many, they would not have been*

בית מרי

*Domus exasperans.
Irritans Sept.
Domus amaritudinis.
In amaritudine me convertunt.*

*Vix centesimum
quemq; fore fi-
delem, Calv. in
Ef. 51.*

*Quot esse puta-
tis qui in civi-
tate nostra sal-
ventur? infe-
rum quidem est
quod dicturus
sum, dicam ta-
men, non possunt
in tot millibus
centum inveni-
ri qui salventur,
quia & de his
dubito. Quanta
enim est, in ju-
venibus mali-
tia? quantus in
senibus torpor?
nemo zelum
habet, multitu-
do sumus sani,
inordinatum
mare, Chryl.
Ad fidem plu-
res veniunt, sed
ad celestia reg-
na pauci perdu-
cuntur, Greg.
Hom. 19. in
Evangel.*

been for wonders, that is a wonder which is rare, unusuall; and it's a rare unusuall thing for men and women to believe the Word of God, multitudes flock to the gates and posts of Wisdome, but few lay up found wisdome in their hearts, many hearers few believers: 1. Cor. 1. 22. *Wee preach Christ crucified unto the Jewes a stumbling stock, and unto the Greeks foolishnesse*; the generality of both reject Christ & his Doctrine, of those that heare the Gospel, scarce the hundreth man is a believing man, saith Calvin, and Chrysostome exceeds him in his 40. Hom. *Ad pop. Antioch.* he thinks that scarce the thousand man that hears the Word will be saved. It's conceived by some Expositors, that in *Antioch* were above an hundred thousand people, and yet this Father feared that hardly an hundred of them were right: *Noah* preached unto the old world, and few or none hearkened. When the *Jewes* were in the *Wildernesse*, how few hearkened unto the voyce of the Lord of 600000. onely *Caleb* and *Joshua* hearkened, obeyed, and entred into *Canaan*, set aside all prophane hearers, all negligent ones, all forgetfull, all unbelieving and unpracticall hearers, and you shall finde the number very few of saving hearers; many cometo heare, but few get into heaven. And you know what Christ hath said, *That narrow is the way to life, and few there be that finde it*, but broad is the way to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. Let Christ speak, he is not heard, not received, let Satan or Antichrist do it, they are heard and followed. *Job. 5. 43. I come in my Fathers Name, and yee receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him yee will receive.* When Antichrist came he was received, *Rev. 13. 3. And all the world wondered after the Beast and worshipped the Beast, saying; Who is like unto the Beast?* The Doctrine and worship of the Beast was easie, suitable to carnall spirits; but the Doctrine of Christ is spirituall, deep, contrary to our fleshly and sinfull principles; and herein the greatnesse of the mysterie of the Gospel is set out, that few do heare and believe.

2. See the infinite goodnesse of God, that will give a Prophet to such a people as this; they were rebellious, had sleighted, rejected, abused all the Prophets in *Canaan*, 2 *Chro. 36. 15, 16. The Lord God sent to them by his Messengers, because he had compassion on them, but they mocked the Messengers of GOD, despised his Word, and mis-used his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose, and*

there was no remedy or healing; God saw nothing would do them good, but that they must be ruin'd by warre, be thrown into captivity, and buried in *Babylon*; yet such was the compassion and goodnesse of God, that he gives them a Prophet here to try them what they will do, whether they would heare and learn righteousness, God will not be overcome with mans evill, but will overcome evill with good: when the *Jewes* had taken Christ the heire, and put him to death, yet he being risen, powres out his Spirit upon the Apostles, and gives them both to *Jewes* and *Gentiles*; and Peter at a Sermon, converted some of those that had wash't their hands in his blood; when God will, nothing shall hinder his mercy and kindnesse, he will give the choicest Ministers to the corruptest people.

3. That sinners in time come to a height and perfection of sinning; they were not only a rebellious house, but a house of rebellion; when it comes to the abstract once, it's at the height: as there is a going on in Gods ways to perfection, *Heb. 6.* so there is in sins wayes: *James* tells us of, sin finished, perfected, *Chap. 1. 15.* Hence *Eccles. 8. 11.* mention is made of hearts fully set to do evill; and *Jerem. 3. 5.* *Judab* is said to speak and do evill, as shee could; and *Israels* sins are call'd mighty sins, *Amos 5. 12.* the originall is, *bony sins*, as men when their bones are come to their full growth, are strong, and men of might; so is it in sinning, when sins are come to their full growth, then are they mighty sins; the like is that in *Jer. 44. 16, 17.* As for the word thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth: to burn incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to poure out drink-offerings unto her, as wee have done, wee and our fathers, our Kings and our Princes, &c. this was the sin of *Judith*, her whole heart and will was in it, and *Israel* was not behind: *Hos. 2. 5.* I will go after my lovers that gave me my bread and my water, my wooll and my flax, mine oyle and my drink, they sinned with greediness, as they in *Ephes. 4. 19.* which sets out the greatnesse of their sin. The Scripture calls such sinners, sons of *Belial*, *Judg. 19. 22.* Sons of *Belial* beset the house round about where the Levite and his Concubine were, in the old mans house at *Gibeab*, they got her, and forced her to death; these were sons of *Belial* indeed, without profit; as some interpret the word, with-

ἀμαρτία ἀπο-
τελεσθαι.

Fortia peccata.

עצמי
טמאתיכם

without yoke, as others, that is, lawlesse, rebellious men, men of wickednesse, given to wickednesse; as *Hophni* and *Phineas*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 12. such as *Christ* will have nothing to do with, 2 *Cor.* 6. 15. unlesse it be to destroy them.

4. That sin is an imbittering thing; the house of rebellion may be turn'd the house of bitterness, that deals bitterly with me, and imbitters my Spirit against them, *Hos.* 12. 14. *Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly, with bitternesses, Ephraims sins were sins full of bitterness; they turn Gods sweetnesse into bitterness, his patience into wrath, his bowels into wormwood; if any thing can sadden divine nature, and imbitter the same, it's sin; What a bitter thing is it, that God should be thrust out of his Throne and Temple, and an Idol set up? What a bitter thing, that the heart and conscience, which is the seat of God, should be the habitation of lusts and Devils? when God sees this, it doth much imbitter his Spirit. When Christ hung upon the Crosse, they gave him gall and vinegar to drink; which was a bitter provocation, and when we sin, we give God and Christ pure gall to drink, *Lam.* 1. 18. the words there are, *the Lord is righteous, for I have rebell'd against his Commandment; the Hebrew is otherwise, because I have made bitter his mouth, I have given him gall and wormwood to drink, a cup of rebellion and disobedience, he is righteous in these bitter afflictions, because I have imbittered his mouth and Spirit with my bitter sins. God is all love, sweetnesse, mercy, and would not afflict and deal bitterly with us, if we did not drinke to him in gall, provoke him by our sins to it. Hos.* 13. 16. *Samaria shall become desolate, for shee hath rebell'd against God; the Vulgar is, because shee hath stirred up God to bitterness; and he will deal as bitterly by her, they shall fall by the sword, saith God, their Infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with childe shall be ript up.* Here was great bitterness we think, but it's nothing to the bitterness of our sins, our sins crosse Gods will, darken his glory, murdered his Son, grieve, vex his Spirit, deface his work, and burthen him daily. There is a double bitterness considerable about sin, the bitterness in sin, and that for sin; this last God never tastes, but all man-kind hath, and shall taste; feares, sorrowes, troubler, sickness, death, &c. but the other bitterness in sin, God alwayes tastes it. *Deut.* 32. 32. *their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters**

מַרְרוּרֵי
Peccata sunt
amaritudines
Dei.

O iniquitas
peccati quæ
suavitatem Dei
in amaritudinẽ
convertit.

כִּי פִיהוּ
מְרִירוּ

Felle & amari-
tudine propinare
Deo.

Quoniam ad
amaritudinem
concitavit De-
um suum.

clusters are bitter, both their works and worship are bitter; there is hypocrisy and superstition in them, there cannot be the least dram of Gall in any thing his people do, especially in worship, but the Lord tastes it, and distastes it; our mouths are so out of relish, that we finde sweet in sin, which is gall, wormwood, yea, bitterness it selfe, Job 20. 12, 13, 14. Though wickednesse be sweet in his mouth, he hides it under his tongue, keeps it, and will not forsake it; yet his mess in his bowells is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him: It's a metaphor from a man given to his appetite, who meeting with some sweet pleasing morsell, keeps it long in his mouth, sucks out the sweet, delights his sense with it, and lets it not go down too quickly; but when it's down, it proves a poisoned bit; and though it pleased his palate, yet it torments his bowels: so sin in most mens mouths, in their fancies and to their senses is sweet, and they roll it up and down in their thoughts, and delight themselves in a conceited pleasure of it, but there is the gall of Asps in it, the bitterness of death: and Solomon, who had found sweetness in the wayes of the flesh, at last felt and acknowledged the bitterness in sin, and in that sin, Eccles. 7. 26. I finde more bitter then death, the woman whose heart is snares and nets, Prov. 5. 4. her end is bitter as wormwood. The bitterness in sin will be tasted at one time or other: Jer. 2. 19. It is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.

5. A rebellious people grow worse by the means of grace; let them heare the Word, or have it tendred to them, they are more obstinate, opposit then before; the point rises thus: *Whether they will beare or no; for they are a rebellious house; they will not beare, they will not receive thee, nor thy message, but out of their old malice and rebellious dispositions, they will be the worse for a Prophet sent unto them, more hardened they will be against thee, thy person, thy Doctrine, thy conversation, thy calling, they will quarrell and question all. Jer. 44. 16, 17. As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not bearken unto thee, but wee will certainly do what ever thing cometh out of our own mouth; they were the worse for the Prophet, more obstinate and set against him, and the truths he delivered, in doing we will do, since thou hast spoken so the contrary, we are more resolved and set upon it. When Christ the great Prophet*

*Quod palatum
oblectavit vis-
cera disrumpit.*

*Faciendo facie-
mus, is the
Hebrew.*

was sent unto the *Jewes*, did they not grow more hard, vile, and opposite to him and his Doctrine? did they not question his calling, and quarrell at his conversation? *Luke*. 4. 18. when Christ had told them that the *Spirit* was upon him, and that he was sent to preach the Gospel, Deliverance, Liberty, the acceptable year, and spake so, as that they wondred at the gracious words proceeded out of his mouth; yet in the 28th verse it's said, *All they that were in the Synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the City, and led him unto the brow of the hill, that they might cast him down headlong.* Christ was a Nazaren, and yet thus would the Nazarenites have served their Prophet, their Messiah, their own Citizen; they would have thrown him down and broke his neck and bones together, which made *Ambrose* say, That these men were worse then the Devil, because when he had Christ upon the top of the pinacle, he offered not to throw him down, but said, *Throw thy self down*; but these would have thrown him down with their own hands: wicked men storm and rage against Christ, his Doctrine and doings, *Luke* 6. 11. when he had confuted their corrupt opinions about the Sabbath, and heal'd the man with the withered hand, it's said, *They were filled with madness, and communed one with another, what they might do to Jesus*; you may see how the words of Christ ripened their corruptions; the Gospel is like the Sun which ripens weeds as well as corn, crabs as well as good fruits; the vine of *Sodom* as well as the vine of *Sibmah*, & the Vineyards of *Timnath* amongst the *Philistims*, *Judg.* 14. 5. as the Vineyards of *Engedi* amongst the *Israelites*, *Can.* 1. 14. And so the Word of God and Gospel of Christ, ripens the corruptions of the rebellious as well as the graces of the regenerate; *Judas* treason, the *Pharisees* hypocrisy, are ripened by the Word, as well as *Jobn's* love, and *Naibnaels* sincerity: in the hottest Countreys are the rankest poyson, the most venomous Serpents; and in *England*, which is *zona torrida* for the means of Grace, is the bitterest enmity to godliness, here are the rankest Serpents that ever lived.

6. That God will leave wicked men without excuse; it's Gods intention, they shall never be able to challenge me, nor to justify themselves; Gods primary intentions where he sends Prophets and meanes of grace, are the good of his elect, their comfort, satisfaction.

Est peior magistro Discipulorum hereditas,
Ambr.

Deut. 32. 32.
Isa. 16. 8.

ification and salvation; but his secondary intentions, are the inexcusableness of the wicked, and their just damnation. Hence is it, that the Apostle saith, *Wee are the savour of life unto life, and the savour of death unto death*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. There is a sort of men that the Gospel is a sweet savour unto, they smell life in it, and it revives them, it works unto life, and these are the elect ones; but there is another sort, that the Gospel is a savour of death unto, they smell death in it, and finde deadly effects from it, they are hardened, worsned, imbittered, and so it works unto death: it's like a strong Sent, that kills immediately: and those it proves so unto are the reprobate, the lost, whose minds the God of this world hath blinded, 2 Cor. 4. 4. Christ also tels us, *Job. 9. 39. For judgement I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blinde*; his first aim was at those under election to do them good, to make them see; the secondary end and aim was, to make others blind; that is, such as were in a reprobate condition: when God sends his Word to any place, it shall, and must prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it, *Isa. 55. 11. be it to win and draw, or to harden and make inexcusable, see Isa. 6. 9, 10. Go and tell this people; Heare ye indeed, but understand not; see ye, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, make their eares heavie, and shut their eyes, &c.* And this Scripture is six times in the new Testament repeated; intimating, that as people are hardened under the means, so they are inexcusable, having had the means; & it's a dreadfull condition, to have Law or Gospel, Prophets or Apostles, and not to thrive by them; Christ pronounces a wo to the Cities, *Mat. 11. that had the means of grace, and mighty works don in them, and repented not; he tells them, it shall be more tolerable for Sodome then for them, at the day of Judgement; cursed Sodomites that were destroyed with so dreadfull a judgement from heaven, shall find more favour at the day of Judgement, and more ease in hell after that day, then any that have had the Gospel and means of grace, and not profited by them; let us learn to tremble at the Word of God, heare it as the Word of God, as that Word shall judge us, and receive the truths of God with love, lest otherwise God send us strong delusions, and we be damnd for not believing the truth.*

7. Wicked men shall one day be awakened, and see what mercy,
K k 2 what

Pro. 5. 12, 13.

what means, off. rs of grace, they have refused and slighted; they shall know that there hath been a Prophet amongst them, the time shall come, that they shall see and feel, that I was neer, that my Word was among them, that salvation was at their doores; they shall finde me a severe Judge, that would not accept of mee a tender father; men go on a long time in a carelesse, sleepe or scorning way, but when sicknesse comes, death is before them, and they ready to take possession of an eternall condition, then their conscience stings them, and they feel what an evill it is, that they have opposed, neglected, undervalued the Prophets & Sons of the Prophets. The Adulterer will be roused out of his pleasing dream and soft bed at last, and say, *How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voyes of my teachers, nor inclined mine eare to them that instructed me?* there will be strong convictions in the bosome of such a sinner, and conscience will sound in his eares, and set upon his spirit those truths of his teachers that formerly have been despised. When *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* were in the red Sea, and the old world had the flood about its eares, what languages did their consciences speak? did they not tell them, they had had *Moses* and *Noah*, Prophets and Preachers of righteousness, and gave no ear to them? did they not sting them to death, and make them cry out, and say, O that we had hearkened to those servants of the living God? whilest wicked men are hearing, sometimes their consciences are netled and gall'd: *Act. 5. 17. The high Priest, and all with him*, when they heard and saw what was done by the Apostles, *they were filled with indignation*; and *Job. 8. 59. the Jews* were so vexed at Christ, that they took up stones to cast at him: and those that heard *Stephen*, *Act. 7. 54. they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth*; with the Saw of anger, malice and envie, they were even sawn in sunder, and gnashed on him with their teeth; and if the Word were so terrible while they had shifts to evade the stroke of it, and comforts to allay the power of it, what would it be to them at last, when all shifts and comforts should fail them? Some have confessed their consciences have been so cudgell'd at the hearing of some men; as they never were in all their dayes before; others, that truths have been so darted into them, they could not get them out in a week, or moneth after; they have stuck like

arrows

*Disceploro,
disserrabantur.
Super Marty-
rem, Stephe-
num, denubus
colubrinis stri-
debant quem
quasi serpen-
tem in corde
habebant.
Aug. Serm. 6.
de sanctis.*

arrowes in their livers, and have been half-deaths unto them, what will the Word be at last unto rebellious sinners? it will arrest them, and be most terrible unto them, *Zach. 1. 6. Did not my words take hold of their fathers?* it did, and will do in these dayes; *Job. 12. 48.* the word of Christ will judge and condemn sinners, be an Anathema Maranatha unto them, and they shall know it.

*Moses dimi-
diat.*

8. That the Prophets shall be witnesses at last, for or against their hearers: they shall know there hath been a Prophet amongst them, his person, his pains, his truths, his life, his sufferings, his death, will all come in for witnesses one day; every Prophet, every Preacher that Christ sends, is a witness as well as an Officer or a Minister; *Act. 26. 16. I have made thee a Minister and a witness;* all faithfull Ministers are Christs witnesses, *Act. 1. 8. They beare witness of Christ and his Doctrine, and if we receive not him and his doctrine, they will be Christs witnesses against us;* when the Lord Christ shall say to a people, I have knockt at your doores many yeers together, but yee would not open unto me, I tendered life and salvation, grace and glory in my Gospel and Ordinances, but you would none of them; you had your Farmes, Oxen, Wives to take up your thoughts, Mammon to serve, honour and praise to seek of one another, examples of men to follow, &c. as for me and my Prophets, my Ministers, you despised, or only gave the hearing, and that was all, and my charge is not false, here are my witnesses; What say you to it? Speak, you Ministers of such a City, and such a place; What, did you not preach many a Sermon, shed many a teare, sweet many a drop, make many a prayer for them? did yee not earely and late watch for the good of their soules, &c. Yea, Lord, but they would not receive us, they would not believe our report wee made of thee, they would not take thy yoke upon them, &c. we shook off the dust of our feet against them. This will be dreadfull, when such witness of the Prophets comes in against hearers.

V E R. 6.

And thou Son of man, be not afraid of them, be not afraid of their words, though briers and thornes be with thee, and thou dost dwell among Scorpions, be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

THe Prophet being struck down with the sight of his glory which sat upon the Throne in the former Chapter, is lifted up and comforted by the Spirit in the two first Verses, and call'd to publique service in the three next, and that among a wretched rebellious people. In this and the two next Verses, the Lord Christ gives him instruction concerning his Office.

First, negatively, in the 6th verse, *Be not afraid of them*; I have made thee a Prophet, and it's not for a Prophet to feare the face of man.

Secondly, positively, in the 7th verse, where he informs him, whose words he must speak unto them; *Thou shalt speak my words unto them*; it's not for a Prophet to speak his own words, but the words of him that sends him.

Thirdly, both negatively and positively, in the 8th verse; *Be not thou rebellious, like the rebellious house*; they will not heare me, submit to my Lawes, walk in my wayes, they go after their own counsels, wils, lusts, but be not thou like them; and then positively, *Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.*

In the 6th verse you have:

1. The Appellation, *Son of man.*
2. The Instruction, Prohibition or Duty, *Be not afraid*, which is often repeated in the Verse.
3. The causes and grounds of feare are specified, which are divers:

First, the quality of their persons; thou maist pretend they are great, Princes and Nobles, but *be not afraid, Mehem*, from them.

The second cause is their words: they will reproach thee, and seek by evill speeches to discourage thee, but, *Be not thou afraid of their words.*

The

The third is their looks; they will look strangely, frown bitterly, swell against thee, and brow-beat thee; *Be not dismay'd at their looks.*

The fourth is their disposition:

1. Metaphorically, by *Briers, Thorns and Scorpions*, they will scratch and teare, sting and kill.

2. Literally, *They are a rebellious house.*

Fear not, be not afraid, be not dismay'd, &c.

These words are four times mention'd in the verse, to shew our aptnesse unto feare, and to shew the forwardnesse of the Lord Christ to cure our feare. The word *dismay'd* (there is no difficulty in the other) it comes from a word that signifies to bruise or beat in pieces; be not thou so affected with feare, as to have thy spirit faint, broken, sink, & discouraged within thee; *be not dismay'd*, let not thy spirit yeeld at all, stand it out; shew thy selfe a man of courage, a man of God, carrying thy selfe in thy place, besitting the Son of God that put thee in that place.

The greater difficulty lies in the other words; *Briers, Thorns and Scorpions.*

Briers.

Sarabim, this Hebrew word is no where found in holy Writ, except in this place. The Rabbies speak of twenty kinds of thorns in Scripture, whereof this is one, and notes Briers with sharp pricks, which do fret and burn in the pricking, much like unto a Nettle; and therefore *Kireker* thinks the word here to signify Nettles: the *Jewes* would be as Nettles unto the Prophet; and Nettles are stinging burning things. The *Septuagint* expresses it by a word which notes a kinde of madnesse, as Cattel that are bit with Flies which suck bloud, and make them run as if they were mad; so they should like wild beasts, grow cruell and outrageous against the Prophet. *Shindler* interprets it, *rebellious, contumacious*; others, *refractory, drawing back, and stubbornly resisting.*

Thorns.

Sallonim, Spina aculeata, sharp pointed thorne, Ezek. 28. 24. *Spina dolorifica*, a pricking Brier, a grieving thorn. The *Septuag.* an offence of bitterness, or, a bitter offence; the word here in our

Text.

αμαζ λυγ-
μων.

Urtica, ab u-
rendo.

παρσπιδου -
infantes qua
si boves astro
agitati. Perri-
naciter resiste-
tes Buxi.

Retrañantes,
Monr.

סלן
ממר
σκληρο-
πριας.

Subverters.

Text is in the Vulgar, *subverters*, because thorns in a mans way do hinder and subvert him; therefore Kircker thinks *sillo nis oculum qui sternitur*, from *Salal*, which is properly *viam aggesta terra sternere*, to lay heaps of earth and stones in the way; and so here heaps of thorns which may prick and offend passengers.

There is one word more to open, and that is *Scorpion*.

Scorpion.

Akrabbim, it signifies sometimes *spinosam herbam*, a plant that growes in the form of a Scorpion, whereof Instruments were made to scourge malefactors, 1 King. 12. 14. *Rehoboam* would chastise them with Scorpions, that is, with whips that had hooks in them, resembling the claws and stings of Scorpions; it's also a living creature, venomous, hurtfull and stinging with its tail, Deut. 8. 15. *God led them through the great and terrible wilderness, where were fiery Serpents and Scorpions.* Mercer thinks the word to be from *Gnakeb*, the heel or hoof, because this Serpent doth bite those parts, and the name Scorpion is from its scattering and throwing its poyson up and down.

Scorpion à
σκαρπιζεν
τὴν ἰσπ.

Now the great businesse we have to do, is to open unto you who are meant by these *Thorns*, *Briers* and *Scorpions*; and by these are meant wicked and ungodly men. I shall make that out unto you from two places of Scripture: *Iosb. 23. 13. They shall be scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes*; he speaks of the Nations that were wicked and among them; and *Luk. 10. 19. Christ* tells the seventy, they should tread upon *Serpents and Scorpions*, that is, wicked men, which are like unto those venomous creatures; and thrice in *Matthew*, are wicked men call'd a generation of *Vipers*, Mat. 3. 7. 12. 34. 23. 33.

I will shew you,

1. Wherein they resemble *Thorns*.

2. *Scorpions*: and then draw some conclusions.

1. Ungodly men are like unto *Thorns* in these respects:

First, they are *worthlesse things*, of little use, they serve to make a hedge, to stop a gap, and that's all, they are not for great use and service; and wicked men are *worthlesse things*, *Prov. 10. 20. The heart of the wicked is little worth*, the best part of a wicked man his heart is of little or no value, his lands may be worth some-
what,

what, his shop, his clothes, his jewels may be of great value, but himself is a worthlesse thing, *Jer. 22. 28. Conia, King of Judah, because wicked, is call'd a despised broken Idoll, a vessell wherein is no pleasure: an Idoll, saith the Apostle, is nothing, 1 Cor. 8. 4. in the world, that is, a thing of no moment, of no use; what then is a broken Idoll? that's altogether inconsiderable: but may there not be some beauty, some engraving, some gilding upon it that may delight? No, he is a vessell wherein is no pleasure; he is so far from delighting at all, that he is a vessell loathsome, to be cast on the dung-hill, and trod under foot: hence in Dan. Antiochus Epiphanes is call'd a vile person, Dan. 11. 21. one so little worth, as to be scorn'd and rejected as a vile thing; and Job speaking of such men, tells us, they are viler then the earth, men to be trod and spit upon as the vilest earth, Job 30. 8.*

Secondly, they are vexing and grieving things; Ezek. 28. 24. there is mention made of the pricking brier, and grieving thorn, and wicked men are full of prickles and grievances, *Numb. 33. 55. If you will not drive out the Inhabitants of the land from before you, then those you let remain of them shall be prickles in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein you dwell.*

Wherein lies this grieving and thorny disposition of the wicked?

1. In their words; and that appears:

First, in their misconstruing the words and wayes of the godly, *Matth. 26. 61. said the witnesses against Christ, this fellow said, I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and build it in three dayes; they mistook Christ, who spake of the Temple of his body, Job 2. 21. Jer. 26. 4. 6. Thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord, If you will not hearken to mee, to walk in my law, then will I make this house like Shiloh, and this City a curse.* Now in the 9th Verse see how they mistook his words, and perverted his meaning, *Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this City desolate?* he had told them it should be so, if they did not hearken, repent and amend; but they left out that, and pretend he had absolutely said, *this house shall be like Shiloh:* so many people mistake the Ministers, and say they preach damnation, when it's conditionally, if they repent not and believe, they must then certainly look for damnation.

*Concinnarunt
mendacia. Va-
tablus.*

2. In their calumniation: they forge lies and falsehoods, Job 13. 4. *Job's friends charged him with lies, hypocrisie, pride, &c. but he tels them, they are forgers of lies, you come to comfort me, but you wound me with your lies and slanders; and David found this, Psal. 119. 69. The proud have forged a lie, they trim up lies with shadows of truth, and neat language; they have mints to frame their lies curiously in, and presses to print their lies withall, Nebe 6. 6. Sanballat calumniates Nebemias, that zealous and faithfull servant of God, and tells him, it's reported among the Heathen, and Gashmu saith it, That thou and the Jews think to rebel; that thou wilt be King, and hast appointed Preachers at Jerusalem to say there is a King in Judah; here was a malicious forgery, a trim lie, and no lesse reproach then *Rebell, Traytor*, must be laid upon this great Worthy and Reformer in Israel. Nebemias returns an answer, ver. 8. *There are no such things done as thou saiest, but thou faintest them out of thine own heart; the Devill is the father of lies, Job. 8. 4. and all his children are like him, forgers of lies, Jer. 20. 10. Report, said Jeremiah's back friends, and we will report it; invent some slanders, some lie against the Prophet, and we will report it, spread it, carry it to the Kings Court and eare, and cause him to smart for his boldnesse; Jeremiah heard the defaming of many; it was their daily work; they said, Let us smite him with the tongue, Jer. 18. 18. no man can have a beautifull and well favoured name for these briers, they will scratch it, and make it very bloudy; it was their daily work: the Christians in the Primitive time, were accused of all the evils fell out; if there were great floods, famines, wars, earthquakes, plagues in the Roman Commonwealth, they cry'd, Away with the Christians to the Lions; and Austin observeth, that they made it a Proverb, The rain said, because the Christian name was suffered.**

*Christiani ad
Leones.
Pluvia defectu
Christiani no-
minis gravia.*

3. Daring, provoking words; Nebem. 6. 2. Sanballat and Geshem dared Nebemias to meet them, *Come, let us meet together* in one of the villages: four times they sent unto him in that manner, thinking by this way to have drawn out Nebemias, and done him mischief; daring, provocation comes from the wicked, and herein they are thorns and briers.

4. Scorning, scoffing speeches; Nebem. 4. 2. when the walls of Jerusalem were building, Sanballat scoffs, and sayes, *What do these fable*

feble Jewes? will they fortifie themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt: and so *Tabiab*, If a Fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall; these scoffs and jeers went to the heart of *Nebemiab*, and made him pierce the heavens for help: *Heare O our God, for we are despised, the Hebrew is despight, we are not only despised, but we and our work are despight in the abstract, mockings are biting things, therefore they are call'd cruell mockings, Heb. 11. 36. Ishmaels mocking of Isaac, Gen. 21. 9. it's call'd a Persecution, Gal. 4. 29. The servants of God have been mock'd and reproach'd in all ages.*

5. Threatnings; *Acts 4. 17. Let us straitly threaten them, to speak no more in Christs Name; and vers. 21. When he had farther threatened them; their tongues were tips with threats, they were thorny tongues, mine sunt spine, threats are thorns, and prick'd them on to the throne of grace, & made them pray as men pierc'd to the quick; for vers. 29. Now Lord, behold their threatening, let not them wound and weaken us, but grant unto thy servants, that with all boldnesse they may speak thy Word. Saul, Act. 9. 1. he breathed out threatnings against the Saints, he was Benoni, a Son of affliction to the Church: so are all wicked men, and their tongues are thorns. Hence they are said in Scripture, to be *arbus*, Psal. 64. 3. to be a sharp sword, Psal. 57. 4. a sharp razor, Psal. 52. 2. and the words of it are call'd *arrows, bitter words, devouring words, Pl. 52. 4. deadly words, Prov. 18. 21. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, it comforts, it destroyes; take the tongue of an evill man that slanders and back-bites, it's a great murtherer. We reade of some double-tongued, 1 Tim. 3. 8. but such a one is treble-tongued, and kills, as Bernard saith, three at once; himself that speaks, the person he speaks to, and him he speaks of; and the worst is, he murders his own soule; therefore Chrysostome observes well, and saith, The tongue is almost the very gate of death, it's the death and ruine of most men in the world.**

6. *Their tongues are briars and thorns*, in regard of their sleighting and undervaluing of Gods servants: as *Paul* is call'd a babler, *Christ* a fellow, the *Carpenters Son*; and many of Gods servants are sleighted in these dayes; such words they meet with as are *thorns and prickles in their sides and eyes*. Because I will not mul-

L 1 3

tiply,

*Luther was
call'd Germa-
na illa bestia.*

*Lingua ejus est
gladius triceps,
Bernard.
Felo de se:
Morris fere
unicum ostium
lingua est.
Chryl.*

tiply, take their blasphemies, O what thorns are those ! thorns to God, and thorns to man. When the *French* had got some victory in *Scotland* against the reforming part there, the *Queen* regent brake out into these speeches, Where is now *Knox* his God? now my God is better then *Knox* his God ; here was a blasphemous passage ; and have we not such blasphemies in our dayes : Where is now your God of Prayer and Fasting ? What's become of all your hearing, preaching, and seeking of your God ? I might adde another particular, which is the thorny counsels that wicked men do give, *1 King* 21. 9. what counsell *Jezebel* gave against *Naboth*, *Proclaim a fast, set him up on high among the people, and set two sons of Belial before him, to beare witness against him, that he blasphemed God and the King* ; here were words of death, here was counsell from hell. It's not unknown what ill counsell hath been given his Majesty of late, and likewise to many others.

Secondly, *In their looks*; that's in the Text also, there is much in the faces of men to daunt and trouble, mens spirits are much discern'd by their faces: *Gen.* 31. 5. *I see your fathers countenance is not towards me as before*, by his face I find a difference in his spirit, saith *Jacob* to his wives, he found no favour in it; the face is the seat of favour or frowns, there is some Majesty in the face and looks of man; and when he is angry, frowns, there is majesticall terror in it: *Pro.* 25. 23. there is mention of an angry countenance, and it's likened to a North-wind, which is cold and scattering; it drives away the clouds that have the rain in them: and oft times wicked men have such northern countenances, that they discourage, if not drive away, the Prophets, who come with the dewes of heaven. When men frown, knit their brows, look angerly, they have put on vizards, and they be scaring things: *Job* 34. 15. *He disguiseth his face*, he is like a man that hath on some terrible vizard, which affrights those behold it. One of the *Nevils*, *Earl of Warwick*, had so terrible a look when mov'd a little, that it was said of him, every wrinkle in his forehead was a Sepulchre to bury a Prince in: he was of kin to that nation, *Deut.* 38. 50. that had fierce countenances; and *Antiochus* a wicked King, is described in *Dan.* 8. 23. to be of a fierce countenance, his very aspect was terrible; and some have been blasted by the frowns of mortals. When some men frown, look sowre, and sparkle with their eyes, they prove Baf-Hisks, and kill those they look upon.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, like thorns in their catching nature; they catch hold of a man when he thinks he is rid of them, & intangle him more: so wicked men, when you think you have satisfied them, and don with them, they catch hold again, they seeke new advantages, *Jer. 20. 10. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Per-adventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.*

The words, *all my familiars*, in the Hebrew are, *every man of my peace*, I thought I had satisfied all their cavils, slanders, objections, and that they had aimed at my peace & good; but they watched for my halting, they sought to entice me, & get advantage; this is the nature of wicked men. Christ, when hee had to doe with any sort of them, he convinced them, stopt their mouths, they went away and left him, and yet they were not satisfied, but sent, and set men to catch him in his words, *Mar. 12. 13.* When the godly fall into the Courts and Prisons where wicked men have some power, what advantages do they seek against them? and when nothing can be proved, no reason but they should be dismissed, fees are multiplied, oaths and protestations tendered, and unlesse these thorns may scratch them, and draw blood from their purses and consciences, they will hold them fast, and liberty must not be had.

Fourthly, A *Thorn* will never alter its nature; set it in the garden or Orchard, water it with milk or wine, do what you wil to the thorn, when you have done all, a thorn is a thorn; so is the nature of wicked and ungodly men; transplant them whither you wil, bring them from the countrey to the city, from the city to the court, put them in high or low places, bring them to the waters side, to the rivers of God, plant them in the Orchards of God, in Paradise it self, under the means of grace; let them have the dew of heaven, the shine of the Sun; a wicked man, he abides wicked still, he will not alter his nature, hee will be no more changling, he is a *Blackmore*, he will be a *Blackmore*, hee will live and dye in his way, though he perish in that way.

Fifthly, *Thorns* are for the fire, *Pf. 58. 9. Before your pots can feel the thornes*; the heat of the fire made with thornes; they are for burning, and that's the end of wicked ones, *Isa. 10. 17. The light of Israel shall be for a fire, and it shall burne and devour his thornes,*
and

and his briers in one day. In fire is light and heat, God would be light to *Israel*, comfort & joy, but heat and burning to the *Affyrans*; he sent down fire to burn the sacrifice, and he would send a fire to burn the *Affyrans*, which were briers and thorns to the *Jews*, and that in one day; and when was this? when he sent an Angel, and slew 185000. here was fire from heaven, a Seraphim, a coal of Juniper, that burnt up such a thicket of briers & thorns, & after this fire they fell into a worse, even the fire of hell, which is the place prepared for all the wicked, *Psal.* 9. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, & all the nations that forget God, there's their end*, and hell is large enough to hold all, *Isa.* 30. 33. *Its deep and large, the pile thereof is fire & much wood; it is silva execrabilis*, such wood the earth brought forth upon the curse, briers and thorns, *Gen.* 3. 18. and the wicked are the fruit of the curse, This phrase *much wood*, some Expositors think hath reference to the fact of the *Jews*, when the 185000. *Affyrans* were slain in the valley of *Tophet*, they made great piles of wood, and burnt those bodies. So God hath piles of wood, thousands and millions of wicked ones, briers and brambles heaped together, and his breath like a stream of brimstone kindles those heaps.

In what hath bin said you see wherein wicked men are thorns and briers; now I must present to you wherein they are *Scorpions*. You may by briers & thorns, understand wicked men of a lower condition, and by *Scorpions* those of a higher, that have more power, means and opportunity to do mischief; and the Analogue between the *Scorpion* and them, lies in these particulars.

1. The *Scorpion* is animal insidiosum, it lies lurking under the thorns & briers, hides it self in holes, & oculis machinationibus ferit. Serpents are subtil creatures; *Gen.* 3. 1. *The Serpent was more subtil then any beast in the field*, and stops his ear against the eye of the charmer. *Pf.* 58. and bites the horse by the heel, so that the rider may fall, *Gen.* 49. 17. And there is one word that signifies simplicity and subtilty, that signifies plainesse & double dealing; when *Adam* and *Eve* were both naked, they were plain & simple, but the *Serpent* was *guarum* in a contrary sense, crafty, full of of folds and windings; and wicked men are subtil; *Comales* we deale wisely with them, *Exod.* 1. 10. The *Sept.* is, *Let us deale cunningly against them*: and in *Pf.* 105. 25. it's said, they dealt subtilly with

Musc.

When they will sting, terga vertunt, ut à nobis declinare videantur, Conrad. in Apocal. Gnatummin.

κατασκοπεύοντες
αὐτοὺς ἀντιπρῶτον.

with his servants. How cunningly did the adversaries carry their plot in the dayes of Nehemiah? Ch. 4. 11. *They shall not know nor see, till we come in the midst of them and slay them.* The Gun-powder-treason was, and some since have beene, carried on with darke Lanthorns, with secrecie and craft. Had not the enemies a close and crafty design to make a conjunction between Papists & Protestants in Doctrine, Discipline, and Ceremony? And had not the only wise God Interposed, turned wise men backward, and made their knowledg foolish, *England and Rome* had met, and we had been in conjunction with Antichristian planets, and wee may feare conjunctions still, more then open violence. Are not things carried with that subtlety at this present, as makes the world to wonder? Men against us pretend Religion, King, Parliament, the liberty of the Subject to be their quarrell: here is much of the serpent, and little of the Dove.

2. The Scorpion is vigilant, watching opportunity of mischief. *Pliny* saith, some Serpents sleep not all the Summer, but are alway thrusting out their stings, & waking lest they should misse their opportunity: and wicked men are very wakeful & watching their opportunity to do mischief, *Prov. 4. 16.* they sleep not whiles they have done mischief, or caused some to fall. *Abab* is wicked, and can not sleep, unlesse he have *Naboths* vineyard. *Amnon* must have *Tamar* to satisfy his lust, else he must lie awake all night. Wicked men cannot be in quiet unlesse they sleep in wickedness. When Christ came to his Disciples, they were asleepe; but the wicked must were awake, & comming to take him; they are restless like the sea, *Isa. 57. 20.* The wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, not when it is calm, but in its working, boiling, restless condition; when it threatens storms, to swallow up ships, to break over the banks, &c. Such are wicked ones, they storm, they swell, and watch where to break out to empy themselves of their estates, to drown a countrey in the blood of a civill war, *Mic. 7. 23.* they all lye in wait for blood, they hunt every man his brother with a net, that they may doe evill with both hands earnestly, &c. They have their net set, they hunt, they watch; and will not lose an opportunity, if one hand will not serve, both shall, and the intention of their spirits also they appearne in the work. And as they are wise to watch their Con-

Tota estate in-
sonnes sunt
quandiu vene-
num viger.

Plin. l. 8. c. 29.
Semper in istu
est, nulloque mo-
mento meditari
cessat, ne quan-
do de se occasi-
ni. Idem.

son, so their feet are swift in running to the accomplishment of them, *Pr. 6. 18.* Were not our enemies watchful and active to break Parliaments, to make Canons, to search pockets, to fetch men into their Courts?

*Eglinus in A-
pocal.*

3. They are exceeding troublesome to the countries where they are, they will get up their walls, into their chambers and beds, as some Expositors observe; & therefore to prevent such evils, they set their beds remote from the wall, and the feet of their beds in pots full of water, and for feare of them, they lie in the highest rooms; they molest them much, and multiply their fears: in this they are not unlike them: *Abab* was a troubler of *Israel*, wicked men are the incendiaries in Church and State; I must not name any, you know more then enough that are not nick-nam'd when they are so term'd, they have troubled this State, this City.

4. They confederate and joyne together to do mischief; one will stick fast to the roof or wal, a second unto him, a third unto the second, and so make a chain; till they reach to the party asleep, and the last stings him, and returns, and so every one back in order; this I find of the *Scorpion* in *Eglinus* upon the *Revelation*; here is both their craft and malice unto man, that they are subservient one to another, & so linked together for such a purpose; herein are wicked men truly *Scorpions*, *Pro. 1. 14.* Come, let us all have one purse: *Nabum 1. 10.* the wicked are as thorns folded together, stick together as the scales of *Leviathan*, *Acts 4. 3.* 6. Rulers, Elders, Scribes, High Priest, *Caiaphas*, *John*, *Alexander*, and as many as were of the kindred of the High-priest were gathered together against *Christ* and his Apostles.

5. The *Scorpion* feeds upon the dust of the earth; it feeds upon base and low things, upon vile and venomous things; so doe wicked and ungodly men: as the Serpent licks the dust of the earth, so do they lick the dust of the earth, they feed upon malice, they feed upon blood, they feed upon that which is not their own, *Amos 2. 7.* They pant after the very dust of the earth, they pant after the estates and means that poor men have in any place where they come, and they feed upon it, and satisfie their malice and revenge to the full, in sucking the estate, and crushing the bones of the Saints of God.

*Lambunt, pun-
gunt, venenum
insundunt.*

6. They kill, *lento morte*, but *gravi supplicio*; when they set upon a man, they lick him, they prick him, they poison him, which quickly

quickly torments, and with in a few dayes kills, *Rev. 9. 5. their torment was as the torment of a Scorpion when he strikes a man*; some Scorpions have double stings, and that they may be sure to kill, they strike with both; wicked men lick us with their treaties, and kill us with their treacheries: *Psal. 55. 21. Their words are softer then oyle, but they are drawn swords*: in the treaties and flatteries of wicked men, if we were not blind, we might see drawn swords, death at the throats of our estate, of our Religion, lawes and liberties. *Haman* flattered with *Esther*, that sought the destruction of the *Jews*, the decree is sealed for the death of young and old, *Est. 3.* here was a Scorpion; and *Jer. 38. 4.* the Princes beseech the King to put *Jeremiah* to death; such a Scorpion was *Jezabel* and *Ahab*, which stung *Naboth* to death, and got his Vineyard. Hence that law in *Ezek. 46. 18* *The Prince shall not take of the peoples inheritance by oppression, so thrust them out of their possessions.*

7. Scorpions are driven away, if any of them be burnt in the house where they haunt: when *Joab* and *Shimei* were put to death by the sword of *Solomon*, then the other Scorpions in *Israel* were afraid, and hid themselves; and the Kingdome was established in the hand of *Solomon*, *1 King 2. 46.* If we shake not our Vipers in to the fire, they will do us harm. Thus you see wherein the resemblance lies between the wicked, in regard that they are call'd *Briers*, *Thorns* and *Scorpions* in the Text.

Si aliqui eorum in medio domus exuviantur, say Palladius and Virga.

The Observations that do arise from the Text are :

1. That he is the fittest man for publique employment, is sensible of his own naturalnesse, weaknesse, and insufficiency for place or service: *Son of man, be not afraid*; I see *Ezekiel*, that thou art sensible of thy own naturalnesse, earthlinesse and insufficiency, *be not thou afraid*, thou art the fitter man for my service; *Moses* pretended that he was a man slow of speech, and unfit for the great work of delivering Gods people, and leading them out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, but he was the fitter man for God : So those Ministers or Magistrates that are sensible of their own weaknesse, they are fittest for Christ and Church service, and the Lord Christ will shew his power most in their weaknesse.

2. Those that are in Gods work, and do intend heaven, they must look for afflictions, they must look for trouble: *Ezekiel*, saith Christ, I'll put thee into my service, but know, thou must not go

a smooth way, thou must meet with Thorns and briers, thou shalt meet with Scorpions and Serpents; there is a Scorpion in heaven, and Scorpions on earth too; let a man be in a heavenly calling, a Prophet; let a man be in a worldly calling, a Magistrate; he shall meet with Scorpions and Serpents, through many afflictions we must enter into heaven, and it is well we enter through many afflictions.

3. The way and method of the Lord Christ is to propound unto us the hardest things at first; he deals so with Ezekiel here, he hears of *Thorns, Scorpions, a rebellious house*, and hears of that which might have discouraged him; but Christ's way is to let you know what you must look for, *Matth. 10. You shall be hated of all men for my Names sake*; you shall be carried to the Court, you shall be scourged and whipped like rogues; you shall be brought before Governours; you shall be put to death; hee tells them of all these things.

First, because it was the way to arm them against those evils: we say, *premoniti, premuniti*, men forewarn'd are forearm'd.

Secondly, that they may have no cause to complain they met with worse matters then ever they heard of.

Thirdly, to strengthen their faith when they should see such things fall out, they might say, these be the things which were foretold, and are tokens that we are in Christ's way. God began the world with this method; *Gen. 1. The evening and the morning was the first day*, it is not the morning and the evening, but you must have night before day, a winter before a spring, and thunder and lightning before a calm; and this is Christ's way, therefore, if you intend heaven, think not to meet only with ease.

These things are all generall; we come now to more particular Observations.

1. Then we must walk warily; though wicked men be not to be fear'd, yet they are to be heeded; *non timendi, sed cavendi sunt impii*. When Christ sent out his Apostles, he tells them what Thorns and Scorpions they must be amongst; men as cruell as Wolves, that would persecute unto death, and what saith he, *Be wise as Serpents, innocents as Doves*; keep your selves from their scratching, their stinging, their teeth, do not you inconsiderately run into their harms, give them no just cause or occasiō of mischieving you

you, *Be innocent as Doves*, without horns, without pushing, going wronging any, only be wary, and defend your selves, as the next Verse is : Beware of men, look to them, they are dangerous creatures, Wolves, Thorns, Serpents are not so dangerous as they, be exact therefore, circumspect, yet not so cautelous as to prejudice duty, or multiply fears: for ver. 26. it's said, *Fear them not*; he had told them they should be hated, ver. 22. carted, scourged, ver. 17. persecuted from place to place, ver. 23. put to death, ver. 21. yet they must not feare, but they must *beware of men*; he saith not, beware of devils, they were subject unto the Disciples through Christs name, but men would not be subject, therefore beware of them. *Ælian* tells us, in *Lybia* men slept with their boots on, because of the Scorpions, that they might not sting them; let us not sleep, but walk booted, I mean, let us be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, Ephes. 6. 15. be shod with a disposition unto peace; let us be peaceable, harmless, innocent, and herdy of our conversation, that they do neither scratch nor sting us.

*οὐκ ἐκείνους
μὴν φοβέσθαι.*
O creatures der-
mire solvere.

2. Publique and great designs cannot be carried on with ease and speed; there be Thorns and Briers in the way, yea, Scorpions, some difficulty or other; Sluggards pretend Lions in the way, but publique, active spirits, when they are upon weighty affaires, finde Lions in the way: *Joshua*, when about a great work, to take *Ai*, there was an *Achan* in the way to make a great demur, and had almost overthrown the design, *Josh. 7*. *Nebemiah* had a great work in hand, and were there no obstacles to let? *Tobiah* and *Sanballat* were in the way, they scoffed, they complied, they arm'd, threatned, yea, the Nobles of *Judah* give intelligence to *Tobiah*, *Neb. 6. 17*. The work of reformation now is a great and good work, and are there no obstacles in the way? yea, there be thorns, and heaps of them, which have prick'd and lam'd some; Scorpions which have bit and stung others, that they move not, or very slowly in this great work; some are unwilling, some unfaithful, some insufficient, some deeply guilty of foul sins, which puts the work more back in one day, then they can forward with their hearts, heads, hands, purses, and lives in many dayes; there are men imploy'd that are *Achans*, *Sanballats*, *Judasess*; we have much policy and carnall wisdom, and think by that to speed great works to their period; but this is, I will not say, the only, but a principall

*Molsum &
impedimentum cur-
sum.*

Remora, while we will cart the Ark, and carry on things upon the shuldres of policy, we are in danger to lose the Ark; yea, in danger to lose all, we will not yet see, lay the finger upon the right fore, and goe to the roote of evils; things of weight in State or Church, have their less, rubs, mountaines, and come not to birth in the day of expectation; this should keep our hearts from sinking, and our tongues from censuring, when great designs sticke, and come not to perfection: Let us remember there be Thornes, Scorpions in the way; Pity and pray for the Parliament, Armies, Magistrates, and Ministers, who have difficult and dangerous work.

*Calumniare
fortiter, & ali-
quid habebit.*

3. Wonder not that men in place are scratched in their credits, and wounded in their estates, they dwell among Thorns and Scorpions, the flaece and flesh suffer by them many times, *Nebemias* is a rebell, *Elijah* a troubler of *Israel*, *Christ* an enemy to *Cesar*, and *Paul* a seditious and pestilent fellow; the *Israelites* could not go through the wilderness, without being stung with the fiery Serpent; *Daniel* escaped the teeth of the Lions in the Den, but not the sting of the Scorpions in the Court. Men that goe into the war, must not think to escape all bullets and blowes; Magistrates and Ministers are Gods Souldiers, they both beare the sword, *Jer. 1. 19.* they shall fight against thee, and it must not seem strange if they get wounde. When *Adam* and *Manasse* are among the bushes, can lesse be expected then scratches? it's the nature of wicked men to blast and bespot the name of others, they have learned and doe practise the Devils, or the Jesuites doctrine, *Reproach to purpose, and something will fasten.* But let the wicked black, God will white, wash the names of his; *Daniels* innocency was cleared up to the King himselfe, *Dan. 6. 22.* *Christ* saith, *Woe to you when all speak well of you, Luk. 6.* He never saith, *Woe to you when men speak ill of you*, he is so farre from that, as he fastens a blessing upon it, *Mat. 5. 11.* *Blessed are you when men speak all manner of evill of you falsely for my sake.* *Basil* saith, when men defame us; we are sorry for them, else I should almost have said, we acknowledge thanks to them for their blasphemies, as procurers of our blisse. It's honour to be reviled of the wicked, their calumniation is our commendation: then a man shews himselfe a man of God and for God, when he displeases those please not God.

*Eorum detractio
est vita
me approbatio.*

God. *Sine* could see on which side *Right* was, when he said, *Argumentum est recti malis displicere.*

4. Seek not the acquaintance of wicked men, the Prophet *Micah* will give you reason for it, *Chap. 7. 4. The best of them is a brier, the most upright is sharper then a thorne hedge.* You think some of them are faire men, have good natures, good parts, great places, and you may be intimate with them, lean upon them, and get good by them, if not doe good to them: but you are deceived, saith he, *the best of them*, for wit, parts, birth, breeding, place, *is a brier*, yea, *the most upright*, those that are civill, that have a form of godlinesse, and walk according to their light, even they are *sharper then a thorne hedge.* And because it is incident to the nature of man to minde great ones, and seeke their acquaintance, he speaks in the verse before, of Princes, Judges, and great men, and beats men off from looking after and leaning upon them; the sheep run to the hedge for shade in the heat, and shelter in the storm; but what's the issue? If they escape with their lives, yet they go off with rent garments: and if the best of them be briers, what are the worst of them? When *David* was become a Courtier, he met with a spear, and found *Saul* sharper then a thorn hedge, his spirit was vext with him, and no marvell, wicked man vex the Spirit of God, who hath more patience and wisdom then man, who is without all corruption, and altogether holy, yet his spirit is vexed with them, *Isa. 63. 10.* Therefore the Spirit of God counsels us what acquaintance to seek, *Job 22. 21. Acquisit thy selfe with God, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee:* he will not be a brier or thorne to run into thy hand, he will not vex thy spirit, trust him, he will not deceive or disappoint thee.

5. See what fruit to look for from them, fruits futable to their nature, *1 Sam. 24. 13. Wickednesse proceedeth from the wicked;* it is a proverb, and they have much truth and strength in them, and it was ancient then, and in all ages hath been made good, observ'd that wickednesse comes from the wicked; by it *David* clears himselfe, taxes his malicious enemies, and confutes *Saul* himselfe. As for me, I am accused to be a seditious & trayterous fellow, a man that seeks thy life, O *Saul*, thou hast followers & flatterers about thee to exasperate thee against me, that put thee on to hunt me, as a Partridge on the mountain, and to spill my blood; but I am no such

What shall you, what can you have from a Scorpion, but aculeum, vulnus, venenum clam & palam insidiabuntur.

Semper lanam, sapè viam perdant.

When one commended *Julian* the Cardinall, to *Sigismund* the Emperour, he answered, *Tamen Romanus est:* And so when any wicked man is commended to you, answer, *Tamen sentis est.*

such man as they pretend, and thou conceivest : I had thee at advantage, was counselled to take away thy life, and could have done it ; but wickednesse was not in me, I cut off the lap of thy Coat when I could have cut off thy Head. I will make thee Judge who is the wicked man, those that accuse me, thou that pursuest the soule of an innocent man, or my selfe that have spared thee, having such advantage. *Wickednesse proceeds from the wicked* ; if I had been a wicked Subject, as thou and others thought, thy life had gone : but thy Courtiers, thy Counsellors are wicked ; yea, and thou art wicked, and nothing but wickednesse comes from you, and that proceeds as light from the Sun, water from the fountaine, breath from the nostrils. Christ tells us, we must not look for good from them, *Mat. 7. 16. Doe men gather grapes of thorns, or figges of thistles ?* If you looke for such fruit, you will be deceived ; they may grow green as the vine and fig-tree, but their fruit is different : what fruit have Papists and Prelaticall ones brought forth in Church or State these many yeares ? corrupt trees cannot beare good fruit, briers, thorns, brambles, may bring fruit for Gadarens and swine, not for Christ and his Disciples, *Judg. 9.* The Olive tree had its fatnesse, the Fig-tree its sweetnesse and good fruit, the Vine its pleasant wine, (they would not leave their places for promotion : For usually when men are promoted, they lose of their excellency, the Olive trees, Figge trees, Vines, they lose of their fatnesse, if not all their fatnesse, of their sweetnesse, if not all their sweetnesse) but what had the bramble ? fire, and fire to consume the Cedars of *Lebanon* : brambles are of aspiring nature, and when they are got up, they fire States and Kingdomes.

6. Then it's no great losse when wicked men are taken away, when briers and thorns are cut down, and Scorpions killed, who is damnified by it ? wicked men are the very plagues of the earth, they suck away the sweet from the Vine, the fat from the Olive : it was said of Nero, that he was *venenum terre*, and when that pitcher was broken, it was gain, not losse, matter for praise, not mourning ; the Husband-man is not grieved when the grieving thorn and pricking thistle are cut out of his corn : *Pro. 11. 10. When the wicked perish, there is shouting* ; shouting on earth, that justice is done, his wickednesse : at an end, the Church and State eard of such

Spinae sunt pestes terrae & frugum morbi,
Plin.

such a burthen, rid of such a thorn; and shouting in hell, *Isa.* 14 9. When *Jehoiakim* died, there was no lamentation made for him, he was a wicked and worthlesse King, his carcasle was no better then the body of an Asse, and he had the buriall of an Asse, drawn and cast out in the high-way or ditches, *Jer.* 22. 18, 19. he had an infamous buriall; and such, saith *Olimpiodorus*, is the end of every Magistrate or Minister that teaches and governs well, but lives ill, his end is infamous, he is buried in infamy; but godly men are of great worth: *Heb.* 11. 38. *the world was not worthy of them*, those precious ones mentioned there, and those are living now, God valued, and values above the world; godly men are the Pillars of the earth, they are the marrow, bloud and soule of the world; the world languishes and lies dying when they are pull'd away: *Moses*, *Exod.* 32. 10. held Gods hands, *Moses* is a man that hath power in earth and in heaven; he is a man, that when there is a danger, can go up to the heavens, and so put the Lord to it, that he saith, *Let mee alone, that I may destroy this wicked people, and I will make thee a great nation*; he would have hired him to have come to an accommodation; men are now upon accommodating, but a *Moses* will not accommodate; no, not with God himself, when his people are in danger, but he will have a blessing upon good terms, he will have Gods wrath removed, and a reconciliation between heaven and earth, or else *Moses* will never be quiet with God; what a losse is such a man? after his death, if God had not raised up a *Josue*, what had become of *Israel*? When *Elijah* was taken away, the horsemen and Chariots of *Israel* went.

7. See here a ground, why we are so wary in having peace with our adversaries; there's much ado about peace; we all say peace, but give us leave to be wary when we make a peace, when wee dwell among Thorns and Scorpions; Thorns have their prickles and grievances, Scorpions have their stings, and wee are unwilling to be stung; we wou'd not have our consciences, our liberties stung; we would not have our priviledges plucked from us, and all be in danger; wee are unwilling to come to this. When *Scotland* had made peace with *England*, *Flanders* and the *Easterlings*, it was said, they had peace with the world, but their Prelates made war with God; so we may have peace with
men,

men, but there are those amongst us, who, if we look not to it, will make war with God, with the Lamb, and those that follow him. It's reported of the *Spaniards*, that they had peace with all the world, but were out with God: if we make such a peace, as to have peace with men, and to be out with God, this would be a cursed peace; if wicked men will lay aside their thorniness, their stings and subtilties, be *Nathanaels*, and not *Achitophels*, *Doves*, and not *Serpents*, we would willingly imbrace a peace; we have on the shoes of the Gospel of the preparation of peace.

8. Seeing wicked men are Thorns and Scorpions, let those in Authority look to it, and doe their duty, that the Briars and Thorns grow not too high, too great; that Scorpions doe not abound. It's said, there were nine kinds of Scorpions about *Jerusalem* & *Syria*, and very great ones, and twenty kinds of Thorns also; I feare we have all those kinds of Thorns and Scorpions amongst us; the Greeks have a Proverb, There is a Scorpion under every stone, and where almost can a man go among us, but there are Scorpions, Thorns and Briars, scratching, catching, and doing a mischief? Let Magistrates tread upon those Scorpions, & Ministers hew those Thorns, *Psal.* 91. 13. *Hos.* 6. 5. Let Ministers do as *Chrysostome* did, who would have his hand cut off, before he would suffer Scorpions and Thorns to come to the Table of the Lord, to poyson that Wine and Bread, and to prick the sheep that came to feed there: Magistrates likewise should do what lies in them, that neither the Scorpions nor Briars do mischief the sheep; you may finde Scorpions in more places then one, in your Courts, Markets, Shops, Fields, Ale-houses, if you drive them not out of their holes, they will be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and vex you in the land wherein you dwell; you may make oyle of these Scorpions, and meat of these Leviathans. *Pliny* and others observe, that if you burn one Scorpion in the midst of the house, all the rest will flie away: if Authority would execute Justice upon some of our Scorpions, cut down some of our Thorns, the rest would flie away; we are so fearefull and backward herein, that we let Scorpions multiply, thorns and brambles increase, not only till our fleeces be scratched from us, but our flesh stung about us, our liberties and lives indangered; we will not see where our sore is, nor search to the bottoms of it; and be-
cause

τοιοι μυστι
αβυσσος σκορπιων
ευδαι.

Numb. 33. 55.

cause we will not doe it, God may justly send fiery Serpents to sting us, and afford no brazen Serpent to cure us. For your encouragement to deale with these, consider, *Psal. 118. 12. 2 Sam. 23. 6. Ezek. 28. 24.* where it is said, *There shall be no more a pricking brier, or grieving thorn unto the house of Israel: for they shall know that I am the Lord God.*

Another principall observation is, That we must not be afraid of men what ever they be, especially those are called to publike place, as Ministers, and Magistrates: Christ calls *Ezekiel* to publike service, and four times he is forbidden to feare in this verse: *Be not afraid of them*, that is, their frowners, be they great ones, Kings, Princes, Nobles, or whomsoever; be not *afraid of their words*, though stormy, grievous, stout, contradictory, &c. because words doe stick and strike deep oftentimes, it is repeated again, *Be not afraid of their words*, let them not affect thee, nor be dismayed at their looks. The Hebrew word *Tecoboth*, signifies to be amazed, dejected, discouraged, and letted in ones way; but the Prophet must not be amazed, dejected, or discouraged with what ever he heares, sees, or meets withall.

To give some few Reasons concerning this, and some helps whereby to fortifie our spirits, that we may not be fearfull, having to do with Scorpions and Thorns.

1. Feares are prejudiciall; they take away our liberty; they put halters about our necks, and strangle our comforts; they multiply and prolong our miseries; they wound and disable us; the work is to be done, *bene, libere, intrepide*; if we feare, that will fetter, infeeble and make us bungle. *Isa. 22. 2.* They were slain, not with the sword, but with feares: Feare slayes a man while he is alive; feare buries a man before he is dead; feares are prejudiciall to those that are in publike place.

2. They are to be men of courage who are in publike place, *Exod. 18. 21.* *Moses* was to provide able men to be Magistrates and Rulers; the originall is, men of strength and courage: the word signifies vertue, strength, a bulwark, riches, an army, all which do increase courage; so that a Magistrate should have the courage of all these: of the vertuous, of the strong, of one in a bulwark, of the rich, of an army; he is to be a man of might, *Dan. 3. 20.* He commanded the most mighty men; it's the same word,

Tuas timor tibi est Nero, tua tentatio tibi est Julianus.

the men of most courage, that were of mighty courage to binde *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego*; those God puts into publique places are to be such: *Iosb. 1. 9. Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed*; where courage is required, feare is prohibited; and where feare is prohibited, as in our Text, there courage is imploy'd, *Should such a man as I flie? feare?* said *Nebem. 6. 11. no, I will not feare nor flie, but be courageous and stand it out against Sanballat & the rest, their power, their scoffs, their threats, their plots: Magistrates, Ministers, and all Gods people should be men of courage, when Reformation & Temple-work are in hand, Hag. 2. 4. Be strong, O Zerubbabel, and be strong, O Iosbua, and be strong, O all yee people of the land, saith the Lord, and work.* The work of Reformation and of the Temple will not go on, if you faint and flag. *Samuel* was a man of courage, when he told *Saul* intreating him to return with him, that he might worship, but he would not return with him; for, *thou hast rejected God, and God hath rejected thee from being King*; and thinkest thou that I will countenance thee? *1 Sam. 15. 25, 26.* So *Elijah* was no white-livered Prophet, but a man of metall, *1 King. 18. 15, 17, 18, 19. As the Lord of hosts lieth before whom I stand* (speaking to *Obadiab*) *I will surely shew my self to Abab this day: I, but Jezabel hath vow'd thy death, and Abab makes search for thee all the land over, and if thou be found, thou art a dead man; Well, saith Elijah, I will shew my self: and when he came into his presence, what a salute had he? Art thou he that troubleth Israel? I'll have thee dispatched one way or other; is the Prophet daunted now? no, but replies, I am not he, but it's thou and thy fathers house: send and gather to me all Israel, (what a commanding, what a suspicious word was this? he might have thought that this man would get power about him, and offer violence to him and his house) thou thinkest to have my blood, but I will have the blood of all the false Prophets, &c.* Who might not think that *Elijah* rather was King then *Abab*? *2 Chron. 26. 17, 18.* When King *Uzziah* would have burnt incense to the Lord, the Priest resisted *Uzziah*, and thrust him out of the Temple; they that are in publick place, are to be men of courage, and therefore they must not feare.

3. God is with his; those he calls and employes in publique service, *Iosb. 1. 9.* Why should he be strong, and of good courage?

rage? for the Lord thy God is with thee. Jer. 1. 8. Be not afraid of Jer. 1. 19. their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee. Gods presence should put life into us: when inferiour natures are backt with a superiour, they are full of courage: when the Master is by, the Dog will venture upon creatures greater then himself, and feare not, at another time he will not do it, when his Master is absent. When God is with us, who is the supreme, it should make us fearlessse, it did David, Psal. 118. 6. *The Lord is on my side, my help, I will not feare what man can do unto me*, let him do his worst, frown, threat, plot, arm, strike, the Lord is on my side, he hath a speciall care of me, he is a shield unto mee, I will not feare, but hope: as it's in the next verse; *I shall see my desire on them that hate mee*, I shall see them changed or ruin'd; our help is in the name of the Lord, but our feares are in the name of man. God takes speciall care of men in publique place; the Angels of the Church are as the stars in his right hand, Rev. 1. 16. he holds them fast, and it's said of Christ, Isa. 49. 2. That he was hid in the shadow of his hand, in the protection of his hand is the *Septuagint*: *Umbra est symbolum protectionis*, it defends from the heat of the Sunne, that was in Judea exceeding hot; God hides Christ, yea, all are eminent, and under, who belong to him, in a speciall manner, and delivers them from danger, Zach. 2. 5. *I will be unto Jerusalem a wall of fire round about*; who shall dare to come neer it then, to hurt the Magistrates, Ministers or people there? Some think it alludes to the Cherubim, that with a fiery flaming sword kept Paradise; others to the fiery Chariots round about *Dosban*, 2 King. 6. 17. where *Elisba* was: either of these is good, and notes protection, but there is another, & it may be a more suitable interpretation; and it's this: When they travelled in the wilderness, of wilde beasts would be assaulking them, specially in the night, when they laid down to rest, then they made a circular fire about them, and so no beast, Lion, Wolfe or Leopard dare meddle with them, the fire was a wall to them; and hence the expression seems to be taken, that God, when wilde beasts, wicked men should offer violence to Jerusalem, he would be a wall of fire round about it.

4. Those are in publique place, are in Gods place; *I have said yee are Gods*, Psal. 82. 6. *Moses* was to Aaron in stead of God, Exod. 4. 16. And so Ministers, they are in Christs stead, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and

they must be like unto God, fearlesse of men, but dreadfull unto men. It's an ill thing to see a drunken god, to heare a swearing god; and it's as ill to see a trembling, fearfull god, a Magistrate, a Minister afraid of man, when as they having the Image and authority of God stampt upon them, are to make others, especially sinners, to quake, *Rom. 13. 4.* The Apostle bids *evill doers*, not the powers, *be afraid*; why, they are the Ministers of God, and *bear not the sword in vain*, they must not feare, but make others do it; so did the Apostles and Prophets, *John* made *Herod* quake, and *Paul* made *Felix* tremble, here were Lambs scaring Lions.

5. They that are godly, true Christians, their godlinesse, their cause suffers by their fearefulness; they have receiv'd another spirit then that of the world, *1 Cor. 2. 12. even the Spirit of God*, which is no timorous, cowardly Spirit; the Apostles denies that, *2 Tim. 1. 7. God hath not given us the Spirit of feare, but of power, of love, and a sound minde*: where there is a base feare, there is sickness of minde, no soundnesse; and there is little love, and lesse power: those that have the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of God, it is not for them to feare; have you the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts in you? have you the Spirit of Jesus Christ in you, and will you feare and tremble before men, that have the spirit of devils in them? the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts is like himselfe, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ is like Christ himselfe, he was not afraid of any; if therefore men in place have this Spirit, they must not feare, for they do dishonour Christianity, and the Spirit they have received from their Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

6. There is not that in wicked men, as should make us to feare them, if we consider they are Briars, Thorns, Scorpions, contemptible things, rather to be despised then fear'd; if they had truth, grace and God with them, then they might be feared; they have not God with them, they are a rebellious house, and he is against them, they cannot pray to fetch in might to make them dreadfull; if they say a prayer, *the prayer of the wicked is abomination to the Lord*: they are full of feares themselves, and have no true valour in them, that arises from other and better principles then they have; if they had truth of grace, God with them, then we might feare them, but their guilt, their wickednesse doth weaken them, and multiply their feares; can wicked men be with-

out feares? *Isa. 8. 12.* feare yee not their feare, they have a slavish, diffracting, heart-smiting, tormenting, hellish feare : *Saul* feared the people, *1 Sam. 15. 24.* Is there not a spirit of feare upon many in *Ireland* and *England* too? have not Judges feared the Courts they have fate in?

6. God will dismay, confound us, if we feare men, *Jer. 1. 17.* Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them, or break thee in pieces. *Jeremiah*, saith God, if thou dost feare them, and betray the truth I have committed to thee, I will forsake thee, leave thee to the hands, malice, cruelty, and break thee to pieces before their faces : fearefulness doth much provoke God ; he that sees not sufficiency in God to support him, shall find enough to daunt and confound him ; but if we go on with courage, discharge the place and trust committed to us ; if we should fall into the hands of wicked men, and suffer, God will own us, let out himself unto us, support us, sympathize with us, deliver us, or make us and our sufferings glorious : Stars shine in the night, they are obscur'd in the day : when *Vincennes* was tormented by the Tyrant, he said, Thou shalt see me more courageous in suffering, then thy selfe in tormenting.

Some helps against feare.

1. Let your feare be exercised about God, he is an object fit to be feared ; all flesh is grasse, all nations are a drop of the bucket, and the small dust of the ballance ; Inhabitants of the earth are as a swarm of Flies, a troop of Grass-hoppers, and shall we feare these little things? the world is nothing unto God ; there is no greatness beside God himself, he hath made the world, he hath dried up the Seas, he sends out the mighty winds, he changes times and seasons, he brings Princes to nothing, makes Judges vanity, he tumbles nations into hell, and can destroy the soule and body eternally, him feare, saith Christ, *Luk. 12. 4, 5.* not men, that can but kill the body, but feare him, who after the body is dead, can kill the soul, and cast into hell ; I say unto you, feare him : and *Isa. 8. 13.* Sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himselfe, and let him be your feare, let him be your dread ; let there be such a frame of spirit in you as becomes the Lord of Hosts, suitable to his greatness, his sovereignty and authority over you and all creatures, then you will not feare ; when the feare of God is strong in your heart,

*Stella in nocte
lucent, in die
latent, Bern.
in Cant.
Videbis me
plus posse dum
torqueor quam
ipse dum tor-
ques.*

*Nil magnum,
nisi magnus
Deus.
Psal. 119. 120.*

heart, then the feare of man ceaseth : when the Dictator rul'd at Rome, then all other Officers ceased ; and when this feare of God rules, all other feares will be hush'd ; and that's not all, if God be sanctified by us, he will be a Sanctuary unto us.

2. Set faith awork ; men in publique place should have their hands at work on earth, and their faith in heaven ; the just live by faith, and will not die by feare. *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 32. 7, 8. when *Senacherib* was coming against *Jerusalem*, and troubled the whole land, he set his hands awork to fortifie the City, and his faith to fortifie himself : Be strong and couragious, be not afraid, nor dismayed, for the King of Assyria and his multitude, for there be more with us then be with him ; with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to helpe us, and to fight our battell ; here was an army of 185000. to affright him, but here was faith in the Lord of Hosts to establish him ; *Heb. 11. 27. Moses feared not the wrath of the King, for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible* : by faith he saw the invisible God, and that made him hold out against the King, though his wrath was hot, his looks fierce, his words terrible, his face cruell ; *Moses* knew, that what ever he lost for God, he should finde in God, *Prov. 29. 25. The feare of man bringeth a snare, but who so putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe* ; mans feare brings a snare, and so death ; had *Moses* feared *Pharaoh*, he had compounded with him, and so ruin'd himself and others, but he that puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe. The Hebrew is, set on high, like a bird upon the wing, that is, out of the reach of every snare and fowler, though never so cunning. *Cardinall Borromeus* being told of great danger from some who lay in wait for him, said, *Ad Deus est in mundo pro nullo ?* Is God idle in the world ? and *Jobannes Silentarius*, being in the like case, said, If God take not care of mee, why do I live ?

*Si Deus mei
curam non ha-
bet, quid vivo ?*

3. Labour for purity and holinesse ; the most holy men are the least fearing men : *Paul* was of great courage, he had much holinesse, 1 *Thes. 2. 10.* and when the Viper leapt upon his hand, he feared not, it could not kill him, but he could kill it ; he shook it into the fire : *Adam* at first no creature could harm him, because holy ; in the lives of the Fathers, mention is made of one *Abbas Paulus*, who handled Serpents and Scorpions, and cut them in pieces without any hurt ; and being asked how he came to this condition,

condition, said, If a man be holy, all things are subject to him, as to *Adam* before his sin in *Paradise*; if our hearts and consciences be polluted, we shall feare, if not flie, 1 *Sam.* 18. 12. *Saul* was afraid of *David*, he had great riches, many forces, yet feares *David* a poor man, a banished, reproach't man; and *Herod* feared *John*, he was a holy man; *Magnas vires habet pietas*, *Job* 17. 9. The righteous shall hold on his way, and be that hath clean hands, shall be stronger and stronger, *Prov.* 28. 1. The righteous is bold as a Lion; a man that is truly and thorowly godly, that knowes nothing by himselfe, that hath purged out every spot, and gotten off all guilt, and needs not blush at any thing, past or present, he is a Lion, he is a brasse wall, nothing shall daunt him, but the wicked flie when none pursue. *Nebemias* was a holy man, and he would not flie, but *Manasseh* a wicked King, hides himselfe among the thornes, and *Adam* runs to the thickets, they had prickings without, and worse prickles within.

4. Value not life too much, let us be willing to lay out our lives in Gods service, to spend and be spent for God: *Act.* 21. 13. *Paul* said, I am ready, not to be bound onely, but to dye at *Jerusalem* for the name of the Lord *Jesus*, he prized the name of Christ above his life; and if wee would prize something above our lives, we should not so over-rate them, as through feare of man, to lose better things to keep them; the Devill tels us, *skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life*; true, all to save life, but there are some things of more worth than mans life, as the glory of God, the favour of God, the peace of God, truth of God, the name of Christ, &c. and we should so account of them, and be ready to sacrifice our lives for them, *Nebem.* 6. 11. he would not go into the Temple to save his life, he knew the glory of God, the cause, work and people of God should suffer by it, and therefore he would venture his life: So *Basil*, when threaten'd with cruell usage and death, said to him had the power in his hand, This body thou art Lord of only, not of our faith, or the cause we stand for, and whereas swords, wild beasts, cutting of our flesh, &c. are threaten'd, these things are rather pleasures then terrors to us; we look at better things then the world hath, for which we are not unwilling to lay out our lives: *Rev.* 12. 11. the Worthies of those times loved not their lives unto the death, they stood, bled, dyed for

Job 2. 4.

*Potius nobis
deliciae quam
tormenta sunt.*

for Christ and his Cause, who had stood, bled, dyed for them. Another observation is; That it's the lot of the righteous to dwell amongst the wicked; the Prophet here dwelt amongst Scorpions, and was amidst Briars and Thorns, a sad habitation, yet such as is common to the Saints: *Lot* dwelt in *Sodome*, and his righteous soule was vexed, 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. it was pained, tormented, as a man upon the rack; and *David* dwelt among those were enemies to peace, and it made him cry out, *Who is me, that I sojourn in Mesek: and dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, *Psal.* 120. 5, 6. that is, with ungodly and barbarous people: and it's not the condition of some few, but the Church it self, *Cant.* 2. 2. which is as a Lilly among Thorns; so was the Church in *Egypt*, in *Babylon*, in the Primitive times amongst the persecuting Emperours, and their Officers; so in the time of Antichrist, and at this day, it is among Thorns and Scorpions; but here is the comfort of it, God takes notice thereof; *Rev.* 2. 13. The Church of *Pergamus* dwelt where Satans throne was, where he bare most sway, had most honour, a multitude of servants, where was great uncleannesse, hot persecution; there did the Church of *Pergamus* dwell, & what saith the Text, *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest*; I know, that is, I take speciall notice of all thy works, wrongs, how the Thorns doe scratch, the Scorpions sting thee, and I will reward thee for all. 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. After mention being made of *Lots* being vexed with the *Sodomites*, it's said, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*; he observes who they are among, how they are tempted, and knowes wayes of deliverance for them, and appears amongst them.

V E R. 7.

And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will heare, or whether they will forbear, for they are most rebellious.

THere is nothing difficult in this Verse; the words, *they are most rebellious*, in the originall are, *they are rebellion*, in the abstract; noting the strength and growth of their sin, of which hath been spoken in the 5th Verse; only observe from hence :

1. That

1. That the Messengers of God must speak the word of God; *Thou shalt speak my words unto them, not thine own, not other mens, but my words; Gods words are divine, verba vite & mortis*, and they must be spoken unto the people, not our chaffy, powerlesse words; *Matth. 28. 20. Teach them to observe what ever I have commanded you*; they must speak onely that, and all that, nothing must they dissemble or hide away.

2. That God cares not whether wicked, vile sinners hear or no, it's sufficient to him that they refuse offers of grace, that's enough to justifie him, and condemne them, *whether they will beare or forbear*, it matters not, I shall have my glory, and thou thy reward, what ever becomes of them. And God deals roundly with them; so Christ in *Mark. 16. 16. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned: yea, Job. 3. 18. He that believes not, is condemned already*; and when Christ sent out his Disciples, see how quick and round he is with those should not receive them, and their word; *Matt. 10. 14. Whosoever shall not receive you and your words, when yee depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet, as a testimony against them: Mark. 6. 11. It shall be more easie for Sodome or Gomorrah then for that house or city.*

V E R. 8, 9, 10.

But thou Son of man, beare what I say unto thee; be not thou rebellious, like that rebellious house, open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee

9 And when I looked, behold, a hand was sent unto mee, and lo, a roul of a booke was therein.

10 And he spread it before mee, and it was written within and without, and there was written therein, lamentations, and mourning, and wee.

IN these Verses, besides Christ instructing of the Prophet, you have his farther confirmation in his propheticall Office, and that by a visible sign, by which he conveys the gift of prophesying unto Ezekiel; and it's by a roul of a booke, concerning which wee have these things considerable:

O o

1. The

1. The efficient cause, or whence it came, *a hand was sent unto mee.*

2. The materiall cause, *a roul of a book.*

3. The opening of it, *it was spread before mee.*

4. The contents of it, *lamentations, mourning and sorrow.*

But before we come to this roul, and the particulars of it, we must speak of Christs instructions to the Prophet.

In the 8th Verse, where wee have,

First, an exhortation, *Son of man, heare what I say unto thee.*

Secondly, a prohibition, *be not thou rebellious, like that rebellious house.*

Thirdly, a command, *open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.*

The summe of the Verse is this; *Ezekiel*, saith Christ, see thou hearken unto my voyce, whatsoever I say so thee, let that be acceptable; regard not what men, what thine heart and carnall reason say to thee; but remember I am God and King, I sit upon the Throne, my counsels and words must stand, be not thou rebellious as the *Jewes* are, let not their example, power, relation to thee, make thee refuse to heare what I say, or to eat this visible and sacramentall sign which I give thee.

There is nothing difficult in the Verse to clear up unto you, only these words, *Open thy mouth*, you may think superfluous, and that the word *Eat* had been enough; but there is nothing idle in the Scripture, all is of weight, and such weight, that heaven and earth shall passe away before one *iota* of Gods Word: it's a rule among the learned, *Vox que videtur otiosa plurimū facit ad effectum*, it notes the ardent desire of Christ, that the Prophet should have the benefit of this sacramentall sign, and that he should be forward and ready unto it, do any thing conduced that way.

Obser. 1. That those are to teach others, must first heare and be taught themselves, they must heare Christ, and learne of him; *Ezekiel* must heare what Christ saith unto him, and then he would be fit to speak unto others: when the Lord Christ sent out his Disciples he instructed them first, *Matth. 10.* So the Apostles were indoctrinated forty daies together in the things pertaining to the Kingdome of God, *Acts 1. 3.* The institution of Churches, the Lawes, Government, Ordinances, Offices and Officers of them, they were instructed in; and *John* in his first Epistle, *Chap. 1. v. 3.* saith,

faith, *That which wee have seen and heard declare wee unto you*; and so it was of the Prophets, what they heard, that they spake, *Heb. 1. 1. God spake unto the fathers by the Prophets*, he first spake to the Prophets, and in them to the Fathers; the Ministers and Messengers of God must heare Christ first, and then declare his minde; be obedient unto his commands, and then mention and publish his Will.

2. God looks for more from them he callsto any service then from others; and *thou Son of man, be not thou rebellious*, I expect other things at thy hand, I look thou shouldst be as tractable as they have been untractable, as dutifull as they have been rebellious, you see who have been most active among them against me, I look thou shouldst be as active in thy place for me; those God doth put honour upon, and set in publick places, it's equall he should have much from, yea, more then from others: saith *Paul, The Lord Christ inabled me, counted me faithfull, put me into the Ministry, 1 Tim. 1. 12. and 1 Cor. 15. 10. His grace which was bestowed up in me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly then they all.* God had done much for him, expected it at his hands; and he deceived not expectation.

3. See here, what God accounts rebellion, we think it must be some great notorious thing that makes a rebell or rebellious; but there is great difference between the judgement of men, & judgement of God. If *Ezekiel* should be difficult and backward to his work he call'd him unto, he would count it rebellion, if he would not heare and doe what God bid him, he should be numbered among the rebellious; if he did not heare every thing that Christ spake, *quocumq; ad te loquar audi*, so the words are read by *Calvin*, and the originall beares it; if there should be a crossing of Gods will in any thing, in the least thing, in refusing to heare or do, it should be before him rebellion; *Isa. 1. 20. If yee refuse and rebell, refusing to heare Gods Will and to do it, being heard, is rebellion against God: so in 1 Sam. 12. 15. If yee will not obey the voyce of the Lord, but rebell against the Commandement; not obeying God, what ever pretence we have, is rebellion.*

4. That we must not follow the examples and wayes of sinfull men, *be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house*; they have set an ill example before thee, do not thou imitate them, they have writ

Præcepta ducant, exempla trahunt.

a foul copy, write not after them, they have walked in wrong paths, doe not trace their steps; such men usually are, as those they live with; it's easie to grow naught, if we live among those are naught: *Joseph* learn'd to sweare in *Pharaohs* Court, and *Peter* to Judaiz: among the *Jewes*; Consent and example of others, is like a mighty torrent that carries down all before it; Example is a potent thing: *Gal. 2. 14. Why compellest thou the Gentiles to Judaize? Paul* tells *Peter*, that there was a compulsory virtue and force in his example, to draw the *Gentiles* into evill; and it's certain, the customes, traditions, perswasions and examples of friends, are of much prevalency; that *Christ* foresaw, and aims the Prophet against them, *beare what I say, not what they say*, let them say what they will, regard it not, only let my words have place in thee, and power with thee. But thou wilt object and say, They are my friends that perswade me, my kindred, mine own flesh and blood that counsell mee, they are great ones, yea, all, Prince and People, that go that way, they are my parents that command me to do so, and I may sin in refusing to hearken unto them, the Lord *Christ* takes off all these and other objections, *be not rebellious* as they have been, and are, but consider; are they friends, kindred, great, Parents? and have they and theirs long been in that way? know, that I that speak to thee, am thy friend, and best friend thou hast; I am thy kinsman, I am here in the form of the Sonne of man, and to suffer in thy nature hereafter, that thou mayest be the Son of God, I am thy brother, who hath redeemed thee from sin, death and hell; if others be great, I am greater then they, and my Throne is above all thrones; if they be thy parents, I am thy everlasting Father, *Isa. 9. 6.* and as I have had everlasting care of thee, so do give thee everlasting Lawes and Rules of worship and godlinesse, in comparison of whose light and wisdom all men are darknesse and folly; and what? will you prefer friends, kindred, great ones, parents, any before me? *be not rebellious* like them, but hearken unto mee, and let them go, make no league with them, that are wicked and rebellious, *Exod. 34. 12.* do not imitate their worship, match not into their families, feast not at their tables; choose none of their wayes, *Pro. 3. 31.* and *Rom. 12. 2.* *Be not conformed to this world, but be yet transformed by the renewing of your minde; that is, do not make the manners of the world,*

world, the rule of your life, nor the worship of the world, the rule of your worship, but look higher; let not your corrupt minds, that will carry you after a corrupt world, a corrupt worship, and corrupt manners prevaile with you, but receive new light from Christ and the Gospel into your minds, and then you will be transformed, you will reje& all old wayes, old traditions and examples of men, and will be lead by Christ, and live by his Rules and Lawes; and thus we may be wiser then our forefathers and teachers: *Psal. 119. 99, 100. I have more understanding then all my teachers, saith David, and I understand more then the Ancients;* and what was the ground of it? he made Gods Law and Word his meditation, his Rule: and those in these latter dayes, that have done so, have got more understanding then their teachers, and are wiser then the Ancients that are for humane inventions, it is lawes not examples we must look too: and the Lawyers have a rule very usefull, men must consider, not what is done, but what ought to be done.

5. That it's the Lords prerogative to appoint significant typical and sacramentall signes: *Est what I give thee*, that was the roul which was sacramentall, and signified the gift of prophecy; No man may lift up a creature to a higher spirituall excellency, then what God has set it in by nature; what mortall had power to have put upon the brazen Serpent a typicalnesse to represent Christ? who had power to make the Rain-bow a sign of the Covenant between God and man? who could make the Temple a type of Christ, but he that fill'd the Temple with glory? and who can institute Sacraments, ordinary or extraordinary, but God and Christ? in them alwayes is a Command and a Promise of grace, which falls not within the compass of mans power.

6. That the Lord Christ provides meat for his servants: *Est what I give thee*; Christ had propheticall meat for him, a roul to give him. It's from Christ, that truths come: As a Nurse prepares meat for the child, and puts it into the mouth of the child, so doth Christ here, he ever gives seed to his sowers; he furnisheth his with abilities, if they want books he will provide them.

*Pro facibus
humanis.
Non tam spe-
ctandum quid
Romæ fiat,
quam quid fi-
eri debeat.*

V E R. 9.

And when I looked, behold, a hand was sent unto mee, and lo, a roul of a book was therein.

HERE we have the efficient instrumentall and materiall cause to treat of: *A hand was sent unto mee*; sent from Christ; there could not be a hand without some Author, he that sat upon the Throne, and made all, he made, he sent this hand; no mention is made of any arm or body; a hand might write it, and reach it forth; *Dan. 5. 5.* there was in *Belsazzars* sad vision, the fingers of a hand came forth, and wrote upon the plaister of the wall, nothing but a hand appeared; had there been no hand, the Prophet might have doubted whence it came, taken it for some casuall thing; but being reached out by a hand, it was evident to him, it came from heaven, even him that he saw so glorious, fell down before, and was comforted by.

The materiall cause is, *A roul of a book, Megillash Sepher*: the Ancients at first writ in barks of trees, afterwards in skins of beasts, which they call *Pergamena*, vellum, or parchment, supposing them to be invented at *Pergamus*, by King *Attalus*, where was a famous Library of Parchments & Manuscripts, but rouls of vellum or parchment were before that time. *Ezekiels* vision was long before the *Roman* Monarchie, *Attalus* lived when that flourished, and having no issue, made the *Roman* State heir to his crown; but rouls were in *Isaiah's* dayes, *Chapt. 8. 1.* Take thee a great roul; yea, in *Dauids* dayes, *Psal. 40. 8.* In the volume of thy book, *Bingillash Sepher*, in the roul of thy book. They are very ancient, and call'd rouls from the rouling them up about Cedar, or some precious wood, that they might be the better preserved. The Law and Prophets were written in such rouls, and when they unrouled them, the *Jewish* Doctors used to expound them, as is gathered from that place, *Luk. 4. 17.* These rouls are in practise to this day in the *Jewish* Synagogue, and they have their *Thorah* or Law written in one volume, and rouled up, as *Paræus* observes on the 5th of the *Revel.* Kings have their Courts of Rouls. And there is nothing antient in the Courts and Libraries of Princes, in their Treasury

*Nihil est verum
stum in princi-
pum Archivis
quod non sit
scriptum in
voluminibus,
Calv.*

fury of Monuments, but is written in roule or volumes.

For the signification of this *Roule*, some make it to signifie the secret counsells of God; it's true, they were written in it, but not signified by it. The *Roule* here, is *symbolum Prophetie*, a typicall sign of the gift of prophetic to be given to the Prophet, and in that sense we are to take it.

Observ. 1. That the Lord Christ doth at his pleasure put forth creative and infinite vertue to effect what he speaks: *Est what I give thee*, and presently a *Hand* is created, a *Roule* is presented unto the Prophet, which none could have done, being destitute of divine power. Christ hath a *Hand* in readinesse alwayes to doe what he will have done; he hath sometimes a visible hand to do it, as here; sometime an invisible, when he call'd *Lazarus* forth of the grave, he had an hand invisible to effect it, when he bid the dead to heare, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, Devils to depart their habitation, he had an invisible hand that effected those things; so in *Acts* 11. 20, 21. when some of the Brethren had preached the Lord Christ, and faith in him, it's said presently *the hand of the Lord was with him, and a great number believed*; there was a secret hand of divine power effecting that in their hearts, which the Disciples preached in their ears: And *Acts* 4. 30. Christ hath a hand to stretch forth, and to heal, to heal soul diseases, and bodily too, to heal State and Church diseases, *Mat.* 8. 2, 3. The Leper said to Christ, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make mee clean*, and *Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean*; and immediatly his Leprosie was cleansed; if wee would look to Christ as this Leper did, wee might finde and feel the hand of Christ.

2. That the Lord doth often times extraordinary things for the encouragement and confirmation of his servants in their Function; Here is a *Hand* and a *Roule* reached out to *Ezekiel*. *Jeremiah* is fearfull and backward to the work of God, and God to encourage and establish him, puts forth his hand, and toucheth his mouth, *Jer.* 1. 9. *Moses* he is doubting, and pleading with God to dismisse him, but by the miracles of the serpentined and un serpentined rod, of the leprozed and unleprozed hand, he confirms in his call to that great and hard service; *Isaiah's* lips are touched with a coal from the Altar in the hand of a Seraphim, his iniquity is purged

Exod. 4.

purged, and so he is heartened to his work, *Isa. 6.* Christ breathed upon his Apostles, and said *Receive the Holy Ghost, Job. 20. 22.* By these extraordinary things they were consecrated to, and confirmed in their offices.

3. That there is a neere conjunction, and sweet analogie between the symbols the Lord Christ useth, and the things intended; Christ intends here the gift of Prophecie to confirm that upon *Ezekiel*; Now what is the externall sign or symbol? it's a book written full of propheticall things, and so did fitly resemble the thing intended: in all the symbols that God had used in the old and new Testament in a sacramentall way, there have been fit Analogies between them and the thing signified and intended by them; Circumcision, the Paschall Lamb, water in Baptisme, Bread and Wine in the Supper of the Lord, do set out the manifold wisdom of God and Christ in accommodating symbols so neer to the truth, and holding it forth so lively; and the wisdom of Christ appeared in conveying the gift of prophecie by a *Roll of a book*. From this example of Christ, giving a *roll* to *Ezekiel*, some conceive, springs that custome in the Universities, at the creation of Doctors, it's done by reaching them out a Book, but how warrantable, I leave to judgement; they do it, may give them *volumen*, but not *rem voluminis*; if they had given them the gift of prophecie, we should never had so many unpreaching Doctors and Prelates.

4. That the gift of Prophecie is from Christ; he reached out a *band*, and gave the *roll of a Book*; he is the great Prophet, and hath all Prophecie and propheticall power in himself, and whom he pleaseth, he can make a Prophet, and inspire with propheticall vertue, and where he pleaseth, even in *Babylon* as well as in *Canaan*.

V E R. 10.

And he spread it before mee, &c.

IN this Verse yee have the opening of the *Roll*, the fulnesse and contents of it; *He spread it before me*, that is, unrouled it, and laid it open before me. The word in the originall signifies to expound

expound and interpret, and we may conceive that Christ did not only spread the scroll before his eyes, but caused him to understand it; by this spreading, he saw it was written within and without; but by Christ's interpretation of it, he knew that there were written in it, *Lamentations, mourning and woe.*

It was written within and without.

The Hebrews, *in the face, and in the back*; that is, on both sides, such writings the Greeks call *Opisthographa*, that is, writings writ on the backside, fill'd within and without. *Levater* thinks, that on one side were writ their sins, and on the other Gods judgements; this fulness of the Roul intimates, either the length of the prophesie, as *Vasablin* conceives, or a multitude of evils hanging over the heads of the *Jews*, as *Maldonat* thinks, or the abundance of revelations committed to this Prophet; as *Jun.* not what *Jerome* and *Bellarmino* conceive, that the writing *within and without*, should note the literall and mysticall sense of the Scripture.

Lamentations, mourning and woe.

Here is the contents of the Roul, bitter and sad things, the burning of the Temple, the overthrow of *Jerusalem*, the captivity of the *Jewish* Nation, and all the evil should befall them; the word *Kinim*, Lamentation, noteth a plain complaint, a sad speech, testifying the sorrowes of minde; as *David* in the case of *Abshalom*, *O Abshalom, Abshalom*, &c. this was a naturall complaint, and simple lamentation, suddenly breaking forth, without all premeditation,

Mourning is more, it's deeper, and upon consideration; the word in the Hebrew is from *Hagab*, to meditate, and noteth, *suspensum ab imo pectore tractum*; when one hath mused much, and seriously upon the cause and matter of griefe, and then fetcheth deep sighs, such as are inditiall of intense and bitter sorrowes, that is the mourning here; *Isa.* 38. 14. *I did murna like a Dove*, the Hebrew is, *I will meditate*, noting mourning that comes from meditation; the Dove's mourning is inward, Cranes outward and lament, Doves mourne.

Woe.

This word *vabi*, noteth not only the voyce in lamentations and

P p

grones

*Expanditur
quando hoc
quod obscure
prolatum fue-
rat per laiti-
tudinem intelle-
ctus aperitur,
Greg.*

*Amara &
mesta.*

groines in mourning, but knocking of the breast, and clapping of the hands together; as is used in greater afflictions; thus some Interpreters understand it; but I conceive by *Woe* here, is meant the threatnings of Judgement, or Judgements threatned, according to those woes in *Matth. 23.* and the fruit of them, as it is, *Lam. 5. 16.*

Observ. 1. That divine mysteries are unknown to men, though very easie and familiar, till they be unfolded; this *Roul* could the Prophet never have comprehended the meaning of, if Christ had not opened it; take all the types and ceremonies of the Law, there were mysteries wrapped up in them, which neither *Aaron* nor *Moses* had known, if they had been left to their own abilities; those elements used in Baptisme and the Supper of the Lord, we should never have known the mysteries of them, if heaven had not helped us: would we think the Rain-bow an Embleme of mercy, if Scripture had not held it out to us? *Indians, Heathens*, do not, cannot so apprehend it; take any divine mysteries, they are too transcendent for our capacities; there be depths in them that we cannot fathome, *2 Cor. 2. 14.* the naturall man cannot know the things of God, they are spiritually discerned, there must be a great mystery wrought in him before he can discern mysteries.

2. It's the Lord Christ that opens and interprets mysticall things, efficaciously unto the faithfull, he spread the *Roul* before *Ezekiel*, and made him to understand the mysteries of it; what is the Scriptures but a roul folded up? a book sealed till Christ open it; we may all say as the Eunuch, being demanded if he understood what he read; said, *How can I, except some man guide me?* *Act. 8. 30, 31.* so unless Christ guide us, and lead us into the mysteries of the Word, wee cannot understand, *Rev. 5. 5.* When none could open the book sealed up; the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* could do it. He hath strength to untie all knots, and a spirit to search all deeps; Christ himself is the greatest mystery, and he is the great opener of mysteries, *Matth. 11. 27. All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knows the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveale him;* if ever God be made known savingly to the soule, it must be by the Lord Christ; and he doth not reveale unto all, but to whomsoever he will, to his Elect ones, from others he conceals him, they have the Letter,
the

the Roul, but not the mystery thereof, their light is darknesse. But there be some in the world, that Christ doth interpret the riddles and darke things of the Scripture unto; see that place in Joh. 15. 15: *Heide forth, saith Christ, I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth, but, I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I make known unto you;* these were Christ's friends, Christ revealed all to them, but from others all was kept; it was Christ revealed unto the Prophets, what they had, and to the Apostles what they had; the Scripture may well be call'd the *Revelation of Christ*; you have one Book call'd so, Rev. 1. 1. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants, that is, his faithfull ones: if we would therefore understand the Roul of the Book, the mysteries in the Scripture, we must look up to Christ, and intreat him to spread them before our eyes, and to interpret them to our hearts.*

3. That the servants of God must not refuse to receive and propound large and sad messages to the people: Here is a *Roul*, writ within and without, and fill'd with lamentations, mourning and wee. Here was *liber mortis*, a book of death, and deadly things; this the Prophet must receive, and declare to the people, how ever they take it; people would gladly heare from the men of God good tidings, they would have a law of kindnesse in our lips, our mouths to drop honey; they would have us sons of consolation, but we must speak what our great Lord and Master puts into the roul, if he bid us preach lamentations, mournings and woes, we must do it.

4. That the Lord gives to his Prophets, truth's suitable to his Providence: Here's a *Roul*, full of lamentations, mournings and woes; sad things, and such things the Lord was bringing upon them; there is a sweet Analogie between Gods Word and Works. His works are his Word fulfill'd, Psal. 148. 8. *Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind, fulfilling his Word;* when there is thunder and lightning, snowes, rains and winds, these are fulfillings of Gods Word, no providences do crosse his Word, but all perform it. Gods works are the best Commentaries upon his Word; and had we the wisdom to bring his Word and Works together; we should see a sweet harmony be-

tween them. This *Book* given to the Prophet, and Gods proceedings with the *Jews* after, were proportionable, they felt what here was writ; all that is done in the world now, is the fulfilling of what is writ, when God gave *Job* his Revelation, he laid in truths to suit with his providence and works to the end of the world; it's *liber providentialis*, and many things in it are acting in our dayes, and before our eyes, though we discern it not; there be truths for these times, and it's their advantage that can take them up.

5. That dreadful things hang over the head of a sinfull guilty Nation.

Ezekiel,



Ezekiel, Chap. 3. Ver. 1, 2, 3.

1. Moreover, he said, Son of man, Eat that thou findest, eat this Roul, and go speak unto the House of Israel.
2. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that Roul.
3. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with the roul that I give thee. Then did I eat, and it was in my mouth, as honey for sweetness.



These words, and to the end of the 15th Verse, by some Expositors, are made part of the second Chapter, and when the division of Chapters was made (about 457. yeers since) it had been more suitable to have ended the second Chapter at the 4th or 15th Verse of this Chapter, then where it is; but wee will take

it as we finde it. In the Chapter, you have,

1. A farther Narration of *Ezekiels* Call, to the 12th Verse.
2. A Declaration of what befell him thereupon, from the 12th to the 16th.
3. A new Revelation, with the events following it, unto the end of the Chapter.

In the first part of the Chapter you have two things :

The first is the continuance of Christ his Speech, and the Prophets actions about the sacramentall sign, viz. the Roul,

Secondly, a renewall of his sending to prophesie, which is from the third Verse to the 12th.

In these Verses is little that needs explaining; that hath most difficulty

difficulty in it, is the eating of the roul; what eating is here meant? how could the Prophet eat a great roul (a thing not credible) without prejudice of his health; life, or both?

Ans. He that commanded him to eat, could have prevented all danger and prejudice, if the eating had been corporall and literall; but it's conceived here, that the eating was not literall, but spirituall, *per visionem*, saith one Expositor, *non respicit, sed spiritum*, saith another; and that in the 10th Verse of the Chapter confirms us in it, where it's said, *All my words that I shall speak unto thee, receive in thine heart, and beare with thine eares*, this was the eating, to heare, meditate, and believe, his journey was spirituall, his work was spirituall; he was to goe and prophesie, and such was his meat, spirituall meat, and spiritually eaten.

But why is he bid to eat the roul? had not seeing and reading been more suitable? look on it, read it; why is the mouth brought in rather then the eye or eare?

Ans. The Scripture doth attribute excellency to, and place naturall & supernaturall vertue, in that organ or sense by which it's exercised, *Gen. 2.7 God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*, the meaning is, he put a soul into him; the nostrils are not the seat of the soul, but because the breath in the nostrils doth manifest the presence of the soul in man, and discovers it, therefore it's said, *He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*: and so here, *Ezekiel* is said to eat the roul; not to see or heare it, because by the mouth, the gift of prophecie which was given him by the roul, was to be manifested and discovered to the people.

Cause thy belly to eat.

Could his, or can any mans belly eat? this seems a strange speech: but take it thus: eating is taken in Scripture, not only for chewing, but for all the actions belonging to meat, as concoction and consumption of it: and the Hebrew word signifies to eat, to dissolve, to consume, and so the sword and fire in Scripture are said to eat, that is, to dissolve, and to destroy; the meaning then is, do thou by this roul, as the stomach and belly do by meat, when they get good thereby, the one doth not presently reject, nor the other transmit, but they retain the meat, draw out all the vertue, concoct it, live and work in the strength of it: so here, *let thy belly eat*,

eat, that is, concoct, digest the truths thou hearest, by serious meditation, and by faith; do not like those that have weak and sickly stomachs, that quickly return what they receive, and get no benefit thereby; but do thou take in all the arguments and truths of this roul; do thou so concoct and consume them by the stomach and belly of meditation and faith, that they may become thy nutriment, thou mayest feel the power and efficacy of them in thine heart, and act accordingly.

And fill thy bowels.

Satisfie thy self, take enough, be not content with a little.

Observ. 1. That our obedience unto Christ must be absolute and simple; *Eat that thou findest*, saith Christ, what ever thou findest; there might something unsavory, bitter, have been tendered to the Prophet, even that which nature abhors; how ever he must eat it, not dispute the case, but yeeld obedience; when Christ commands, blind obedience is the best, to do it upon that ground, and no other, here the commanders will is warrant for the fact, *Luke 5. 5.* this prevail'd with *Peter, Master, wee have toiled all night, and have taken nothing, never thelesse at thy word I will let down the net.* Christs word was all unto him, he lookt not at his labour lost, at his gain to come, but at the word of Christ, and that was warrant enough to him: so other Apostles, when Christ call'd them, and bid them follow him, *they left all, and straightway followed him*; they consulted not with flesh and blood, they made no objections, chose not what they would themselves, but submitted to Christs will: *Abraham* left his countrey at Gods call, and knew not whicher he should go, and this was true obedience; with men we must not be so tractable, as to do things meerly upon their wills and commands, they are no gods, their wills and power are no rules, they may sin, we must give account; and therefore may, and must examine, *prove all things, and hold fast that which is good*; humane things, it's our duty, it's wisdom & safety to question, and search into, but divine things are without dispute, and all questioning to be believed and obeyed, therefore saith Christ, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*, *Joh. 15. 14.* then we shew the greatest love to Christ, when we give him absolute obedience.

2. That the symbols and truths which Christ gives, are the
meat

*Authoritas
præipientis est
ratio præcepti.*

meat that the souls of Prophets and Ministers must feed upon; *Eat what thou findest; eat this roul*: it's *this* emphatically, other rouls and books they may look into, but this they must eat; the Book of Christ is the book for their studies; many Schollers study other books more then the Scriptures, then the rouls of Christ, they are *Heluones librorum*, book-eaters, Fathers, School-men, Historians, Poets and Pamphlets; they devoure, and are least acquainted with the Scriptures, but Christs command is to eat this roul, search the Scriptures, meditate in the Law night and day, he sends us to no other. A young disciple asking an old Rabbi, whether he might not have time to learn the Greek tongue, said; if he would doe it neither by night nor by day, he might, because by night and day he was to study the Law; hereby he intimated, that Schollers greatest study should be in the Word of God; *Paul* therefore exhorts *Timothy* to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, he bids him meditate upon these things, give himself wholly to them; *1 Tim. 4. 15.* his whole strength and time should be in them; mans life is short, and if it were never so long, it should be spent in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures; when *Paul* was at the gates of death, *2 Tim. 4. 6.* you shall finde he sends for the Books & Parchments, *Paul* would study them over again; it's said of *Ambrose*, that to his death he ceased not to write Commentaries, and expound Scriptures, and dyed at that in the Psalm, *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.* This Book they must eat, read, study, with great diligence, and make it their own: *Alphonfus King of Aragon*, read over the Scriptures some twelve or fourteen times, notwithstanding his great and publique employments: and one of note read over the new Testament with *Bizar's* larger notes sixteen times in three yeares; the Scriptures are heavens Epistles sent to men, it cannot be read too often, being full of divine mysteries.

3. That when Ministers and Messengers of God have eaten and digested the truths of God, then they are fit to goe and preach them to the people of God. *Eat this roul, and go*; first, eat, then go; *Elijah* must eat, and then take his journey; and so Ministers must first eat themselves, then feed others; if the Nurse her self doe not eat, shee will have no milk for her childe, if shee eat and doe not digest, turn it into bloud and milk, all is in vaine: so
the

*Epistola Dei ad
homines missa,
Aug. 2. Serm.
in Psal. 90.
Omnia etiam
minima plena
sunt sensu, my-
sterio & spi-
ritu, Bas.
Hom. 6.*

the Messengers of God must turn what they eat, what they read, *in succum & sanguinem*; and then, being their own, in their hearts and bowels, they will speak from the heart.

4. That faith is requisite to the receipt of spirituall things, he opened his mouth, and eat the roul, he received the truths and believed; look how necessary a mouth is to take in the meat of the body, to chew it, and send it down to the other parts, else there is no benefit comes to a man by it, so necessary is faith to take in the spirituall food of the soul: Faith is the mouth and stomach of the soul, if that receive in truths, digest and send them to the organs of actions, benefit accrues to the man, if not, prejudice. *Job. 6. 35, 36.* Christ tells them that he is the *Bread of life*, that he comes to him shall never hunger, & that he believes on him shall never thirst, but yee have seen me and beleve not: though Christ were *Bread* and *Water of life*, because they had no faith, no mouth to eat and drink thereof, therefore they had no benefit, and as a man that can receive no food must die; so here, *Job. 8. 24.* *If yee believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins*; here is prejudice irreparable, death eternall for want of faith: our Prophet received the fruits Christ tendered, and got by them; all believers are or may be gainers by the truths of Christ, 1 *Thes. 2. 13.* *The word wrought effectually in them that believed*: Faith makes good concoction of that meat, and answerable operation; But *Heb. 4. 2.* *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it*; where is no faith to receive into the soul, there is no profit, the eare may set it into the head, but faith must bring it into the heart, and keep it there, till it be spirit and life to the man. The originall is, the word of hearing did not profit them, being not united by faith to them that heard.

Observ. 5. The godly must act and put forth their graces towards farther reception of spirituall things: when Christ will give Ezekiel *donum Prophetie*, a Roul to eat; he opens his mouth, he sets a work his faith to receive this gift of Prophecie; faith in the habite is like the mouth shut up, nothing enters, but in exercise it's like the mouth open and ready to receive; it's infinite mercy that God at any time will offer us spirituall favours and excellencies; we should therefore be forward, and stir up our souls and graces to the receipt of such mercies. It's a lazie and ill excuse for

נפח signifies *sculpere* as well as *aperire*, God open'd the roul for me to reade, and I open'd my heart for him to write.

αὐτῶν ἑαυτοῦ.

godly ones to say they can do nothing; Grace is an active and an enabling thing, and where there is a principle of life (as all godly men have) there is a special difference between that man and another hath it not; a man without it, cannot act and stirre up himselfe to a further reception of spirituall things, because he is dead; but a man hath it, can, and ought to quicken up his own soul to spirituall things. The Prophet had received the Spirit that entred into him, and he opened his mouth, exercised his faith, to take what the Lord should give: the Apostle Paul bids Timothy stir up the gift of God that was in him, *1 Tim. 1. 6.* he would have men deal with their gifts and graces, as they do with fire under the ashes, they blow them off, and blow the fire up; and there is a flame fit for service: sloth, feare, infirmitie, carnall reason, are ashes that do oft cover divine fire, that it seems dead; but we must stir up our selves, blow off those ashes, and blow up the fire of grace, that it may burn and shine, be usefull to our selves and others. The Prophet complains in *Isa. 64. 7.* *There is no man that stirres up himselfe to take hold of me;* they are like men asleep, that sit still and do nothing. The Vulgar is, *Non est qui surgat.*

6. When man hath done all he can, the efficacy and fruit is from God; *Ezekiel* opened his mouth, but the Lord Christ caused him to eat the roul, he makes it effectuell; it's not our stirring up our graces, opening our hearts, putting forth our selves to the utmost, that will make an Ordinance effectuell, without Christ; it's he must do the deed, *Job. 15.* *Without mee ye can do nothing:* *Ezekiel* could not eat the roul, nor digest it, being eaten, not act, being digested; and so the Apostles, though branches in the Vine, could draw no sap from the root, unlesse that sent it up; when sent up, could not send it forth without him; if send it forth into clusters, could not ripen it without him; all is from him, he gives grace, exerciser, strengthens and prospers graces; Paul may plant, but there is no rooting of those plants but by Christ; *Apolo* may water, but no growth, no increase, but by Christ, *1 Cor. 3. 6.*

7. Ministers, and all should feed liberally upon the Word; *Fill thy bowels with this roul*, not taste of it a little, but feed and fill themselves; there is great variety in the rouls of God, and wee may feed upon them all, and fill our selves with divine truth; *Matt. 13. 52.* *Every Scribe instructed to the Kingdoms of heaven hath a treasury*

treasury of things new and old; as a Householder hath all meate, wines, household-stuff and furniture that is needfull, both old and new; so should a servant of God have, old and new truths, those of *Moses* and the Prophets, and the Myseries of the Gospel also. *Col. 3. 16. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly;* he means not some part of it, but the whole Word of God; it's not limited to any part, but spoken indefinitely, and so includes all; and it must not be in the Assemblies, in the Houses onely, but it must be in you, and dwell in you, you must know it, and have it in readinesse, as you know those dwell in the house with you, and are ready to do any service for you. The *Corinthians* were enriched in all knowledge; and wee should so abound with divine knowledge, that there should be no place for errors in us; the Word of God should be in our hearts, in our heads, in our lips, in our lives, we all should be like *Ezekiels* roul, *written within and without.*

8. The Word of God is sweet and delightfull to the soule, it was as honey for sweetnesse; there is nothing more sweet then honey; the word is, as sweet as it; yea, *Psal. 19. 10. Sweeter then the honey, or the honey combe,* the greatest sweetnesse is in the Word of any thing in the world. The sweetnesse is in the *Revelation* of the Counsels and Myseries of God & Christ, which is sweet to know; for knowledge is pleasant, *Prov. 2. 10.* And the more excellent the knowledge, the more pleasant it is. It's a word of life, *Phil. 2. 16.* and life is sweet, and the more spirituall the life is, the more sweet still, it converts the soul, *Psal. 19. 7. it's Pabulum anime,* call'd by *Peter,* *ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ γαλακτος*, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* sincere milk, & that is sweet, nourishing unto eternall life. It's the grace of God brings salvation, *Tit. 2. 11.* and the power of God to salvation, *Rom. 1. 16.* and herein is sweetnesse; it sanctifies, *Job. 17.* it comforts the soule in all straits and afflictions; *Psal. 119. 29. I had perished in mine affliction, unlesse thy Law had been my delight:* it satisfies the conscience, which nothing else can do. It shewes the equity of Gods judgements and dealings with wicked men; and in the sharpest threat, and most dreadful judgements, are sweets to a gracious heart: here was a Roul full of lamentations, mournings and woe, and yet when the Lord commends it to *Ezekiel*, he finds sweetnesse in it; not that he was not sensible and affected with the miseries coming upon him; for he was not without naturall affection; but seeing the righteous-

ness of God in his judgements towards them, he could not but be affected with a spirituall joy, and finde sweetnesse therein, his Will being revealed, and that which a gracious heart rests in.

V E R. 4, &c.

4. *And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speake with my words unto them.*
5. *For thou art not sent unto a people of a strange Speech, and of a hard Language, but to the house of Israel.*
6. *Not to many people of a strange Speech, and of hard Language, whose words thou canst not understand; surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have bearkened unto thee.*
7. *But the house of Israel will not bearken unto thee; for they will not bearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted.*
8. *Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.*
9. *As an Adamant, harder then flint, have I made thy forehead: feare them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.*
10. *Moreover, he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee, receive in thine heart, and beare with thine ears.*
11. *And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God, Whether they will beare, or whether they will forbear.*

IN these Verses is a removall of the Prophets sending to his Propheticall Function, and they have in them matter of encouragement, and manifestation what he must expect:

1. Matter of encouragement; And

1. In that he was not sent to a people of a strange language, that understood him not, *Vers. 5, 6.* that would be discouragement, to preach to a people should not know what a man said; this was not the Prophets case, but he was to go to the house of Israel, whom he knew, whose language he understood, who also understood him.

2. In that Christ had strengthened and fitted him for that service,

service, *Vers. 8, 9.* and would yet do more for him, give him more truths, reveal more Propheticall things unto him, *Vers. 10.*

3. That it should be all one to him, whether they heard the Prophet or not, *Vers. 11.*

The other thing is, manifestation what he must expect:

1. More from *Heathens* then from them, *Vers. 6. end: surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have bearkened.*

2. Obstinate refusall of him and his Prophecy, *Vers. 7. The house of Israel will not bearken unto thee:* and it's proved by a double argument:

First, *they will not bearken unto mee,* is an argument from the greater. If they will not heare me their God, they will not heare thee my servant, their Prophet.

2. Is from their disposition, and the universality of it; *for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-bearded.* And then a repetition of his mission, in the 11th Verse.

I shall open what is difficult in the Verses, and then give you some observations out of them.

The words in the 5th Verse; *of a strange speech & hard language,* and the same in the 6th Verse are expounded in that place in *Isa. 33. 19.* In the originall the words are *deep of lip, and heavy of tongue,* or rather a people of *depths of lip,* and *beaviness of tongue;* In the word *depths,* there is a *Metalepsis,* depths are dark and difficult, hard to be understood; it's not so here; *thou art not sent to such a people, a people of a hard and heavie language, of an unknowne tongue;* the *Septuagint* hath it thus; *not to a people of a deep lip, or heavy tongue,* thou art sent to a people that understand thee, and what thou sayest, and whom thou dost understand also. It's not with thee as it was with *Jonas,* he was sent to a people of a strange speech, and hard language; I send thee not to *Egyptians,* to *Chaldeans,* but to *Israelites,* not *Parthians,* *Scythians,* &c. but though thou art in *Babylon,* where was the confusion of tongues, yet thou art to goe to the House of *Israel,* and speak to them, that have heard *Moses* and other Prophets before, and me in them.

In the 7th Verse it's said, *the house of Israel are impudent, and hard-bearded;* the Hebrew is, *strong of face, and hard of beard,* the same with those words in the second Chapter, v. 4. onely the difference is, that in *Chapt. 2.* it's *duri faciebus,* and here it's *duri corde,* there

עמקי שפה
וכבד
לשון

ἐμπροσθεν
βαρυγλωσσῶν
καὶ βαρυχαρα-
κτῶν, ad populum
profundilabi-
um & gravi-
linguem.

כשמיר

Ab α α α α α
μα' α.

Plin. lib. 37.

חוק מצר

Nec pudore
vinceretur,
nec metu tace-
ret aut pal-
lesceret.

there it's *robusti corde*, and here it's *robusti fronte*.

In the 9th Verse, it's *as an Adamant harder then a flint, have I made thy forehead*; *Keshmir*, the word *Shamir* signifies a Brier, Isa 5. 6. *There shall come up briers, Shamir, a brier, and it's from Shamir, custodire, servare*, because a Brier by its prickles doth preserve it self; it signifies also a hard and flinty stone, such as an Adamant is, which is *lapis servabilis*, because it keeps it self by its hardness from all injuries; no weather, no violence of hammer or fire wil conquer it; so much the name *Adamant* imports, being *lapis indomabilis*, Zech. 7. 12. *They have made their hearts as an Adamant*: there be four sorts, The Arabick, Macedonian, Cyprian, & Indian, which is the chiefest.

Harder then a flint; it's in the Hebrew, *strong above a rock*. By these expressions are set out, the invincible courage and constancy that God would give the Prophet; such as neither shame nor fear should prevail against.

In the 10th Verse; *All my words receive into thy heart, and bear with thine eares*: it's *ὕσσω ὑποῖπον*, the last first, and first last, *bear with thine eares, and receive into thine heart*.

Observ. 1. That those are sent of God, must speak with, or in Gods words. saith Paul, *What I have received of the Lord, that I deliver*, not what I have received of men, of learned Heaibens and Jewes; not what I had of mine own, but, *what I received of the Lord*, his words, his institutions, Gods words are weighty, and have divine authority in them, but mans are weak like himselfe.

2. From the 5th and 6th Verses observe:

1. That it's God determines and disposes of his Prophets and Ministers, for their places and people; what places they shall be in, what number they shall be over; *Thou art not sent to a people of a strange language, not to many people, but to the house of Israel*. God had the power in his hand to have sent him to other Nations, great, mighty, of an unknown language, but he set him among *Israelites*, Acts 20. 28. it's a divine constitution.

2. That men call'd of God to do him service in the Church, should not be discouraged, what ever difficulties are before them. *Thou art not sent unto a people of a strange speech, not to many*; this implies, that if he were sent to these, he should goe willingly, cheerfully; and much more, being upon easier service, the Call of God should be encouragement enough. And if our eyes be much upon

upon that, it will prevent much sin, many distempers; of the servants of God (when they come amongst their own friends, acquaintance, country-men) are slighted, and meet with hard measure, and course usage, but they must remember who call'd, who sent them.

3. That Gods wayes and judgements are unsearchable; the means of grace are denied to those that would imbrace them, and given to those that refus'd them; *surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened*, although thou hadst preached in a tongue unknown, by one means or other they would have been brought to repentance, they would not have been so perverse and ingratefull as the *Jewes* were; *Jonah*, and *Nabun* too, as *Pradus* conceives, preach'd to *Niniveb*, and they repented; and it's likely many Nations now, if they had the Gospel preached unto them, would imbrace it, and bring forth better fruits then Christians do; *Matth. 11. 21, 23.* Christ saith; *If the works be had done in Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, had been done in Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, they would have repented, and remained to this day*; but God in his infinite Wisdome and Justice, denied both the words and works of Christ to those places. We cannot sound this depth, yet let us say, God is righteous, and take heed it be not verified of us, that *Turkie, Persia* and *Tartaria*, would have repented, if they had had the means we have.

*Per interpre-
tes, per nuntios,
per gestus com-
moverentur ad
penitentiam.*

From the 7th Verse observe:

1. Mens wills do harden them and ruine them; *They will not hearken unto thee*; there is obstinacy and malice in the wills of men, that they reject the Word of God, and what is for their good; *You will not come to me, that you may have life*, saith Christ, *Joh. 5. 40.* I will give you life for fetching, and you will none of it, and when he came to them, what said they to him? *Wee will not have this man to reign over us*. Let Christ come, a King of righteousness, seeking the good, the salvation of sinners, they will not submit to him, their own wills shall stand between them and salvation: *Bernard* saith, A mans will is his hell, it carries a man against heaven, and swiftly to hell.

2. There is such corruption and strength of stubbornnesse in men, that they will not heare God himself; *They will not hearken unto me*, though there be infinite equity in it, that they should

*Voluntas sua
est infernus
suis.*

give me their eares, hearts, all their strength and intentions, for I have created them of nothing, redeemed them, being worse then nothing; I have prepared eternall mansions in the heavens for them that do heare me; I speak the words of Wisdome and Life, I aim at their good and comfort in all that I speak; yet they will not heare me: Here is the strength and perfection of stubbornnesse, a childe not to heare its parents, a people not to heare their Minister, subjects not to hear their Prince, is thought bad enough; but children, people, subjects, not to heare their God, is the height of iniquity. And because they will not heare Christ, therefore they will not heare his Messengers, but despise, persecute and murder them, and that because he sends them; *Job. 15. 21. All these things will they doe unto you for my name sake.*

3. Corruption lies not onely hid in the heart of sinners, but breaks out in an impudent manner, they are impudent and hard-hearted, there is stoninesse within, and impudency without.

4. Sin is of a spreading infectious nature; the whole *house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted*, the one corrupted another, as it's in a bunch of grapes; if one be corrupte, it will corrupt its neighbour, and that another, till they be all alike: so was it here, one infected another, till the whole house was so; it's like the leprosie in a garment or house, that spreads through all. *Gen. 6. 12. All flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*

From the 8th and 9th Verses: observe,

1. That the Ministers of God must look for opposition in their way; their face and foreheads were against the Prophet, they would be like beasts, that use to push with their horns and heads; *1 Cor. 16. 4. There is an effectual dore opened unto me, and there are many adversaries*; when God opens to his Ministers a dore of hope to do good, here presently appears many adversaries to shut that dore again, and so to take away the hope and opportunity of doing good; it was at *Ephesus*, and there he met and fought with beasts; in the race of his Ministry he met with *Hymeneus, Alexander, and Demetrius*, that opposed him: *John* met with a *Diotrephes*, and wee must look for many such.

2. Divine vertue and assistance doth accompany a Divine Call: *I have made thy face strong against their faces*; I call'd thee, and strengthened thee; the H. brew is, *I give thee a face strong*; I
do

do and will inable thee with spirit and audacity to out-face them. In *Matth. 28. ult.* Go preach, and loe I am with you to the end of the world; he sends them, and seconds them, he calls them and encourages them: *I am with you, peculiari assistentia*, by my grace, strength, comfort, direction, spirit; those that are call'd of Christ, and sent of him, therefore may with comfort expect the help of Christ to go through the work he hath put them in. *Paul*, when sent to the *Corinthians*, he came in demonstration of the Spirit and power, *1 Cor. 2. 4.* And in *Col. 2. 29.* he saith, *The working of grace was mighty in him, in power and efficacy*: we are oft discouraged at the greatnesse and difficulty of the work; *Who is sufficient for these things*, said *Paul*? but when he look'd at Christ, he said, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth mee*; and if we would look more at him, and lean upon him, we should do more, and do better; if thoughts of our weaknesse, of the work, of our oppositions and enemies sink us, Christ gives balm, spirit, and a face to our face all; a Minister doth not warfare in his own strength, but is arm'd from above.

3. What ever Ministers have, it's given, if they be indued with the Spirit, wisdom, liberty of speech, courage, or any other excellency, it's that the Lord Christ bestowes upon them; I have made thee so and so. Let not us be lift up, our Master Christ had in him all the treasures of Wisdom, the Spirit above measure; he was full of grace and truth, did more then all, his fame was great, and yet he was humble, and bad us learn of him; he did not sleight or despise men of mean talents, and infinitely beneath himself, but acknowledged the least good was in any, and encouraged it; his steps should we follow, and not swell with a conceit of worth, nor with reality of parts and excellencies; it's the practice of too many to sleight others, and build up themselves by their ruines, but this is a worldly and wicked practice, never taught by Christ, his Doctrine is, Let each esteem others better then themselves, *Look not every man on his own things, but on the things of others*, *Phil. 2. 3, 4.* it's injury and indignity to Christ, not to reverence and esteem his graces and gifts in others. *Bernard* tells of one, who bewailing his own condition, said, he saw thirty vertues in another, whereof he had not one in himself, & perhaps, said *Bernard*, of all his thirty, he had not one like this mans hu-

*Non militat
propriis viri-
bus, sed arma-
tur celesti vir-
tute.*

mility, this grace is the glory of a Christian, and especially of a Minister; pride is for Prelates, and humility for Prophets; God brooks not pride in any, least of all in his Messengers: Christs Disciples had a tincture of it, their thoughts were aspiring, who should be greatest, but he sets a child before them, and tells them, who is greatest, not he that hath the strongest head, the best notions, doth the most service, but he is the most humble, he is the most high; humility is so valued of God, that he likes it in *malefactis*, rather than pride in *recte factis*; a man that is innocent and proud, is less in Gods eye, than he that is guilty and humble: let us rather mind the good in others, to honour them, and maintain love, than that is in our selves to lift us up, and make us sleight others.

4. Christ puts insuperable vertue and strength into his servants, such as the powers of darknesse and the world cannot prevail against; *I have made thy face strong against their faces, as an Adamant*, as a rock, let the winds, waters, floods, blow, wash, beat, they prevail not against the Adamant, the Rock; they are *res indomabiles*: so is the power, vertue and grace of Christ in the heart and head of a faithfull Minister; reproach and derision put Jeremiab to it, had almost silenc'd him: *I will preach no more*; Jer. 30. 9. *but his Word was as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay*; there was vertue within which would out and act, God had told them, that they should fight against him, but not prevail; Jer. 15. 20. Luk. 21. 15. Christ tells his Disciples, *he will give them a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries should not be able to resist*; and could that great Councell in the 4th of the Acts prevail against Peter and John? *We cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard*, Vers. 20. So Stephen was too stout for all his adversaries, Act. 6. 10. Such vertue was put into Basil the great; you know how he answered the Ruler, and stood impregnable against his threats, who went and told the Emperour, saying, *Victi sumus, Rex, in Ecclesia hujus negotio vir ille minis est superior, verbis robustior & persuasionibus fortior*. You must set upon some other man more ignoble, or force him openly, you shall never overcome him with threats; this made Nazianzen say of him, that he was *percutientibus adamant, & dissidentibus magnes*: Could all the policy of the Conclave, and power

power of Antichrist conquer that divine vertue was put into *Leather*? The wicked may drive the godly from their standings, not from their steadfastnesse.

5. That the Messengers of God being call'd and strengthened by Christ, are to go on *animo intrepido*; *Fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be rebellious, &c.* If they be strong, or against thee, I am stronger that am with thee; if they frown, I smile; if they watch to do thee hurt, I watch to do thee good; if thy Doctrine provoke them, yet it pleases me.

From the 10th Verse observe;

1. That the heart is the treasury where the truth should be laid up; *Receive my words in thine heart*; he must heare with his eare, but that is not enough, he must also admit the word into his heart, and lay it up there; what is in the head may soon be lost, but what is in the heart abides: Books lockt up in the closet are safe, and truths laid up in the heart are secure; *Jam. 1. 21. Laying aside all filthinesse and superfluity of malice, or naughtinesse, receive in meeknesse the ingrafted word*; they must first put out of their hearts filthinesse, malice, wrath, what ever had possession of the heart, and keepe out the Word, and open their hearts to entertain the Word; that as it's with a grasse put into a stock, so it might be with the Word in their hearts, even be an *ingrafted Word*, a word to root and grow there, and bear fruit in the life; *Luk 8. 15.* The seed on the good ground, are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit. The heart is the ground this seed will grow in: *David* knew this, & therefore hid the Word of God in his heart, *Pf. 119. 11.* And why thereto *that I might not sin against thee*. This corn will not let the weeds grow, when the Word is in the heart, it keeps under all corruption, it makes them languish and come to nothing; many do by the Word as by their Jewels, they hang them at their eares, that is the place for them, and so the Word is only in their eares, they heare, and that is all, it enters not into their hearts, & therefore is subject to casualty, the Devill, world, pleasures, one thing or other steal it away, or make it unfruitfull; but the heart is the right & best place for that treasure. A godly mans treasure is in the heart, within, anothers in the eare, and without; many heare the Word with the eare, but receive it not into the heart; and that is a worthelesse

τὸν καρδίαν
ἀκούει.

hearing; *Job*. 8. 47. The *Jews* heard Christ preach, yet he tells them their hearing was no hearing; *ye beare not Gods Word, because ye are not of God*. They heard, but not with the heart, the truth entred not, abode not with them; let us look to our hearing, and lay up the truths of Christ in our heart, *Luke* 2. 19. *Mary kept those sayings, and pondered them in her heart*.

2. All the truths of Christ must have interest in the heart; *Psal*. 40. 8. *Thy Law is within my heart*, he doth not say, a Precept or two, a part, or half the Law is within my heart, but *thy Law*, the whole Law; some truth, none is so bad, but he would give entertainment unto truths of mercy, truths of liberty, truths of ease and comfort, truths in credit; so men might pick and choose what truths they listed, they would imbrace them, but when truths are reproached, will subject to danger, losse, difficulties, when they strike at our lusts, call for mortification, self-deniall, conformity to Christ, &c. then men will scarcely afford truth their eares, much lesse their hearts; hence those expressions in Scripture, of mens perverting the wayes of God, *Act*. 30. 10. of being contentious against the truth, *Rom*. 2. 8. speaking evill of it, *2 Pet*. 2. 2. of resisting it, *2 Tim*. 3. 8. yea, persecuting it, *Act*. 22. 4. There be many truths that flesh and blood cannot indure, some have torn out parts of Scripture, because crosse to their lusts and lives; it's known what hath been done to the Word of God in *Ireland*, and *England* too of late dayes. Some are enemies to the whole truth, most to some parts of it, but we must receive all the words of Christ; if the least tittle of the Law and Gospell be more durable and excellent then heaven and earth, there is sufficient reason it should have interest in our hearts; let the truths be what they will, so they be the words and truths of Christ, we should receive them, and that which makes us receive one, should make us receive all; Do I receive one, because it's from Christ? then I should receive all, because they are from Christ; if I do not receive all, I may miscarry for refusing of one truth; *Psal*. 119. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandements*.

Marth. 5. 18.

From the 11th Verse, observe;

1. That affliction is a fit time for instruction: *Get thee to them of the captivity, they were in Babylon, stript of all, captives under Nebu-*

Nebuchadrezzar, and now the Lord judged it a fit season for a Prophet to be sent unto them; when people are in misery, they see the uncertainty of life, the insufficiency of all creatures, the futility of sin, that the wrath of God is a dreadful thing; thoughts of death and eternity are upon them, and now is a good season to bring the truths of the eternall God unto them, *Vexatio dat intellectum*, it makes men consider, look about, inquire how they may be delivered, where to get safety. When a Kingdom is in danger, a Parliament is seasonable; when there is war in the gates, then counsell and instruction are welcome, and when people in captivity, a Prophet amongst them will do well.

2. When Gods people degenerate, he owns them not for his; *Get thee to the captivity, and to thy people*, God own'd them not; now his care of them, and affection towards them, is much abated: God doth look upon things and persons, that he formerly took delight in, being corrupt, as not his own: *Isa. 1. 14. Your new moons and appointed feasts my soul hateth*; they were the Lords people, he appointed the new moons and feasts, but because they had corrupted them, he owns them not, but calls them theirs: so in *Exod. 32. 7.* God bids *Moses* get him down from the mount; what was the matter? *Thy people thou broughtest out of Egypt have corrupted themselves*; their corrupting themselves with Idolatry, made God disclaim them; *they are thy people*, go look after them, I will destroy them else; he calls them *Moses* his people there, and here he calls them *Ezekiels*, to let them see how his heart was estranged from them; while they were faithfull to God, he counted highly of them, they were precious in his sight, honourable, beloved; but when they went a whoring from God, he accounts not of them, he calls them not his, owns them not; they had shamefully dishonoured God by their sinners, and he will not honour them with the title of *his people*.

Isa. 43. 4.

3. The servants of Christ must execute their Functions without respect of persons, or regard to success; *Speak to them, what ever they be, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord, that one greater than themselves hath sent thee*, and will call them to account, and whether they will beare or forbear, let not that trouble thee, do thy duty, be not troubled at the oppositions of men, or successlesse of thy labours.

V E R. 12.

Then the Spirit took mee up, and I heard behind me a voyce of a great rushing, saying, Blessed is the glory of the Lord from his place.

13. I heard also the noyse of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noyse of the wheels over against them, and a noyse of a great rushing.

14. So the Spirit lifted mee up, and tooke me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit, but the hand of the Lord was strong upon mee.

15. Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abid, that dwell by the river of Chebar, and I sate where they sate, and remained there astonish'd seven dayes.

THese words are the second part of the Chapter, and contain in them a Declaration of what befell the Prophet, being so call'd, and the particulars are these:

1. The work of the Spirit in taking and lifting him up, *ver. 12th*.

2. The voyce he heard, *ver. 12.* and what it was, *Blessed, &c.*

3. The noyse of wings and wheels, *vers. 13.*

4. The ablation of the Prophet, *vers. 14.*

In the 12th was a sublation, in this an ablation.

5. The journey he went, in the 14. and 15. *verse.* And

6. His condition, *hee was in bitterness of spirit, hee sate and mourned seven dayes, Vers. 14, 15.*

The Spirit took mee up.

By Spirit here we understand, not the winde, as if some great wind should take up the Prophet, nor an Angel, as if he had been lift up by Angelicall vertue, nor his own spirit, as *Jerome* would have it, but that Spirit which was in the living creatures & wheels, Chap. 1. 12, 20. and led them; that Spirit entred into *Ezekiel*, and set him upon his feet, Chap. 2. 2. That Spirit which led Christ into the Wildernesse, *Mat. 4. 1.* even the eternall Spirit of God.

This taking up of *Ezekiel* by the Spirit of God was:

1. To perfect and ratifie his Call to the Propheticall Office; the Lord Christ had spoken much unto him about it, and now the Spirit

Spirit lifts him up, and seals the same unto his soul, strengthening him in the full assurance thereof; when he had heard Christs voyce, and found his Spirit working so extraordinarily, as to lift him up; this could not but mightily prevail with, and satisfie the soule of the Prophet.

2. That he might have a more cleer and full view of the glory of him that sate upon the Throne: when we would have one see things distinctly and fully, we set or lift him up on high. The Devill carried Christ unto an exceeding high mountain, and shewed him the glory of the Kingdomes of the world, *Mat. 4. 8.*

3. To put honour upon him, in letting him see, that he was to be an organ of the Spirit for the future, he was to be employ'd in great service by the Spirit, and that was a great honour. Hee was to be the mouth of the Spirit unto that people; to be wholly at the dispose of the Spirit.

4. To avocate his thoughts from things below, and to settle them upon contemplation of things divine; a Prophet is not to look downward, his heart should be lifted up to heaven, and heavenly things.

And I heard behind me the voyce of a great rushing.

It was not the voyce of thunder, or of an earth quake, but of the living creatures; and the voyce some make to be the words: *Blessed is the glory of the Lord from his place*; which words are in the originall, *the blessed glory of the Lord from his place*; that is, the glory of God is now going out of his place, and it troubles the Angels, that they lament, and make a great noyse, to behold so dreadfull a judgement to befall *Jerusalem* and the *Jewes*; and so the voyce to be differing from these words. If it be granted, that these words were the voyce uttered, yet may they be taken in that sense, as is expressed; to shew their sorrow for the ruine of the Church, The blessed glory of the Lord is departing from its place, God is leaving his habitation and people, and all is hastening to spoyl and desolation, this affected the very Angels: when some great man, that hath been a great Patron and friend to a place, is going away; what lamentation is made? what a noyse and stir is there at it? as in these dayes, when some Ministers, Magistrates, and other eminent Christians, are forced from their place by the enemy;

enemies; what complaint doth it cause? what a noyse doth it make? and so when God leaves a people, that were belov'd and deare unto him, it fetches sighs and complaints, not onely from men, but even from Angels also; the soul finds it a sad thing when God departs from it, and oft mourns bitterly. Some take the words for a *Doxologie*, and make the sense this; *Blessed be the glory of God, which is seen in punishing the wicked, and delivering the Church.* God shewes himself just and righteous, that he will no longer stay among a sinful people, but be gone from them, and render to them according to their wayes. The Quere will be, in what sense we may take the words? both senses may without prejudice be admitted, while the Angels looked upon the great losse the *Jewes* should have by Gods departure, the great evils would follow thereupon; they sympathized, and were so affected with it, that they brake out into these expressions, *The blessed glory of God is going out of its place,* and so it was *vox lamentationis*; but when they look'd at Gods Justice and holinesse, they said, *Blessed is, or be the glory of the Lord.* Though men be ruin'd, Cities and Nations destroyed, and God driven from his habitation, yet let his Name be glorious, and so it's *vox laudis*, and brought in to answer the Objections and Cavils the people might make; they might say: What? will God leave us? expose us to the spoile of forain enemies? shall we and ours be cut off? will he thus deal with his people? is it come to this? What equity is in it? The Angels, to prevent such murmurings, and vile speech, said, *Blessed, &c.* even when he is in a way of judgement, he is to be honoured and made glorious.

Blessed is the glory of the Lord from his place.

Wee must make some search into these words, and inquire after the person, the place and the glory. The person here is taken to be Christ, who appeared unto the Prophet in the Vision. The place, the Throne where Christ sat; and the glory, that's mentioned in the end of the first Chapter. And Christ now being about to goe off his Throne, and put an end to the Vision, the Angels cryed, *Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place.* This is not all we must expect from the words, they type out unto us, the departure of the Lord from the Temple; that God would

would be gone, and take away that which was the chief glory of it.

From his place.

God is illocal, and the Rabbins use that word, to signifie Gods illocality ; which notes place ; *Makom* is a space, or place, because all things subsist in them ; *Hammakom*, per *Antiphrasin*, is *illocalis, infinitus*, one that subsists, or is comprehended in no place, and so is an attribute of God. How then is God here said to have place *Mimekomo*, *From his place*? God properly hath no place, it's *sensu metaphorico*, that place is given to him ; where he in any speciall manner doth manifest his glory, power, grace and goodness, that is said to be his place.

And three places God is said to have in the Scripture :

1. The heavens ; *Isa. 66. 1. Heaven is my throne*, and *1 King. 8. 30. heare in heaven thy dwelling place*.

2. The *bumble beart*, *Isa. 57. 15.* that is Gods dwelling place. And

3. The Temple in *Sion*, *Psal. 132. 13, 14. Sion* was his habitation, there was his rest and abode, that is, in the Temple, being in *Sion*, in the Temple and Sanctuary, were his voyce, his Way, *Psal. 18. 6. Psal. 77. 13.* That was the place where his honour dwelt, *Psal. 26. 8. The habitation of his glory*. The words are in the originall, *the place of the habitation* or *Tabernacle of his glory*, alluding to that in *Exod. 40. 24, 25.* where it's said, The glory of the Lord filled the *Tabernacle*. So the glory of the Lord filled the Temple ; there was the presence of God ; there was manifestations of his glory ; there he heard Prayers, and there he gave out many gracious answers ; there he accepted of their sacrifices, and communicated himself unto them ; there was the Ark and sign of Gods presence, and the Cherubims, from between which God gave out the Answers. In these things lay the glory of the Temple, but now God would be gone, and all the glory of the Temple should depart ; God moved not from place to place, being infinite, illocal, immovable ; but he is said to depart, when he ceases to do as formerly he did, in the soul, when you finde not God acting and manifesting himself, you say he is gone. Here now God would answer them no more ; not accept their sacrifice, nor heare their prayers, &c. he would not do as formerly he had done ; he would not protect them any longer,

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but

but look upon them as being unworthy of his presence, glory, protection and help, and in his wrath leave them to ruine and spoil of their adversaries, and this was God departing, according to that in *Hos. 5. 15.* *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence.* That phrase, *blessed glory of the Lord*, you may for your better understanding, conceive thus, *Blessed be the glorious Lord*, or, *the glory, the Lord*; or, if you will take it as it's read, the meaning is, that the glory of the Lord is to be celebrated.

Observ. 1. That those that are call'd to employment in the Church of Christ, have need not only of Christ's word, but Christ's Spirit also; Christ had spoken largely unto *Ezekiel*, and here the Spirit lifts him up, and doth in especiall manner animate and arm him to the work; when the Apostles had been long with Christ, heard his Sermons, seen his Miracles, life, joynd with him in prayer, all this would not do it, though Christ had forty daies spoken to them in particular of the things of the kingdom, *Acts 1. 13.* till they had the Spirit, and were fill'd with that; therefore Christ bid them wait for it, he knew they had need of it, *ver. 4.* and that it wou'd do more in them, then all he had said unto them, the Spirit would be *Deſtor intus*, and acquaint them with all truth. The Spirit would purge out their feares and distempers, it would warm, heat, seal, ratifie, and make them resolute in the work.

2. That the Angels do sympathise with the Church and people of God in their miseries. This voyce was, as I shewed in the opening, the voyce of the living creatures, and they made a noise, lamenting the state of *Jerusalem*, God being upon the leaving of it, and exposing it to great misery; Ah, said they, the blessed and glorious Lord is going from his place, and all miseries are now stepping in upon his people, this affected them; we know that the Angels rejoyce at the conversion of sinners, and by the Law of contraries we infer they are sadden at the destruction of sinners, of States and Churches; they have been employed to comfort in trouble; and where there is no sympathy, there is little solace. Do you not think, that the Angel seeing Christ his Lord and Master in his agony, that he did sympathise first with him, and then strengthen him; Angels being without sin, are as full of pity as the Devils are of cruelty: God, Christ, and the Spirit, are full of

of pity, and it cannot be, that Angels which are so neer them, should be void of it, no, they have a holy sympathy with us; in Gods departure from a place is sad newes, even to Angels.

3. The happinesse of a people, is to have the Lord and his glory amongst them; and their greatest misery is to have God depart from them; most think the happinesse of a people to lie in liberty, honour, plenty of all things; David once subscribed to it, *Psal.* 144. 15. *Happy are the people are in such a case*, but he quickly crosseth out that subscription, and said, *yea, happy is that people whose God is their Lord*; there's the happinesse to have God amongst them, he is the glory of a people, *Zach.* 2. 5. he was the glory in the midst of Jerusalem, there God dwelt, as his worship, Lawe, oracles, miracles, testified, and so he made Jerusalem glorious among all nations. Where true Religion is, pure Worship and Ordinances, and God working for the good of a people, defending them, that is the glory and excellency of a kingdome, 2 *Chron.* 13. 25. saith *Abijah*, *God is with us for our Captain*, this was more then all the strength of Judah beside, when *Jarobeam* came against him with 800000. chosen men, With you are the golden calves; *vers.* 8. *you have a great number*, but God is not with you to be your glory and defence, you have the calves, which is your shame and nakednesse, but God is with us, who is our glory and defence. And when Jerusalem fell to Idolatry, God tels them, *that they had changed their glory for that did not profit*, *Jer.* 3. 11. they had driven away their glory; and here was the beginning of their woe. That's the misery of a kingdome, to have God depart from it, then publike enterprises prosper not, 2 *Chron.* 22. 24. then counsell faileth, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. protection is gone, *Isa.* 5. 5. then peace, loving kindnesse and mercies go, *Jer.* 16. 5. This is as taking the Sun out of the firmament, the eyes out of the head, or soul out of the body; now a kingdome and people lie exposed to all evils and mischiefs, *Hos.* 9. 11. *Wo to them when I depart from them*, all mischiefs presently step, croud in upon a people left of God; famine, wars, captivity, a perverse spirit, and treacherousnesse one to another, came upon this people, when God left his place: And so after Christs dayes, when God left them, and that voyce was heard in the Temple, *Adigremus hinc*, which *Tacitus* in his *Annals* also mentions, *Audita major humana vox excedere Deos, simul ingens motus excedentium*, after this, dreadful

Joseph. de bel. Jud. l. 7 c. 2. Lib. 21.

misery befell them, war, famine, dispersion was their portion, they are without God, Christ and mercy to this day, an undone, and most unhappy people. We had almost driven away God by our sins, specially by our Idolatry, superstitions, but God and his glory are not quite gone, *Jer. 14. 9. Tet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy Name, leave us not.*

4. God is glory, or glorious; there is nothing in God inglorious; as in the Son is only light, so God is light, and in him is no darkness, he is all light, all glory; his Attributes are glory, his Essence is glory, his Life is glory, God is only glory; Blessed be the glory, the Lord.

5. Under the Law, God confined himself to a particular place, to the Temple; there he dwelt, appeared, received sacrifices, gave answers, &c. So that the Temple was not only *locus*, but *medium divini cultus*, the Jews were bound to set their faces towards it, when they prayed, *1 King. 8. 48. Dan. 6. 10.* it being also a type of the body of Christ, *Job. 2. 19.* that sanctified their Assemblies and sacrifices, *Matth. 23. 19.* But it's otherwise now under the Gospel; neither Jerusalem nor Samaria is the place where God is fixed, *Job. 4. 21.* but Gods habitation is in all places where he hath Saints, *Mat. 18. 20. Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, I am there in the midst of them. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Ies are the Temple of the living God; and what saith God? I will dwell in them, and walk about in them, that is, in the Church of Corinth; and so in all Congregations. Now the Congregations are Gods habitation, he walks amongst the golden Candlesticks, there is the glorious God seen, the glorious God heard. But the place now where the meetings are, be neither means nor parts of worship, no types of Christ, nor do they sanctifie the people, or service done in them, rather do the people and Ordinances while they are there sanctifie them; and yet when the Ordinances are ended, and people gone, no holiness abides in them, but they are as other places.*

6. The Lord is worthy of praise, when he is in a way of judgement: Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place; now he was departing from Jerusalem, all woes and miseries taking hold of them, yet was he a God deserving praises; Gods judgements are deep, we oft know not the reasons of them, see not the equity of Gods proceedings in them, yet we should be so far from murmuring, that

ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐν
αὐτοῖς, ὅπου
ἐπιπλάσθη.

we should count him worthy of honour and praise, when he deserts Churches and Kingdomes, *Exod. 15. 11. God is fearsfull in praises.*

7. It's the work and office of Angels to praise God; the living creatures here said, *Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place;* and *Rev. 5. 10, 11. There were many Angels about the Throne;* and what did they? they sang, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;* So the Seraphims in *Isa. 6. 3.* their song was, *Holy holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* Angels are musically creatures, and make the best melody; *Arias* thinks it was an Angel dictated the Song of *Deborah* unto her; *Luk. 2. 13, 14.* there was a heavenly Chorus, and sang a heavenly Song, *Glory to God in the highest, on the earth peace, and good-will towards men;* this was a short, but a sweet Song; when great things have been don by God, the Angels have been brought in praising God: as when God created the world; *Job 48. 4, 7. Where wast thou, saith God to Job, when I laid the foundations of the earth? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?* that is, the Angels; as Interpreters observe, who at the sight of that great and glorious work were much affected, and sang the praises of God; so at the birth of Christ, and here at the departure of God out of the Temple, the great God, doing great works, must have great praises, even the praises of Angels; praise is an Angelicall work, and the office of Angels, and the Spirit calls for it at their hands, *Psal. 148. 2. Praise him all his Angels,* and they do it, when he is in his judgements. The *Jews* thought God dealt hardly in punishing them; but Angels saw cause to praise God for his departure from them, and vindicating his glory in the punishment of hypocrites.

8. God doth his works without motion or mutation; Here it's said, *from his place;* there is a shew of motion and change, but no such thing befalls God, his works make motions and changes in the creature, not in himself, he is infinite, fills heaven and earth, and never removes from one place to another, he is immutable and not subject to changes.

From the 13th Verse, of the wings, wheels, and noyse of them, I have spoken in the first Chapter largely; yet a little I shall speak of the Verse,

*A. Lapid. on
Judg. 5. 23.*

*τῶν Ἀγγέλων
ἀνταρτία 151
Ψαλμὸς 148.
Theod.*

Verse, it's said, that the living creatures touched one another; The Hebrew is from *Nashach*, to kisse, and each other, in the Hebrew, is a woman to her sister.

Observ. 1. God makes use of Angels and second causes in the government of the world, and execution of his judgements, all creatures have being from, and dependance on God, and he may employ them to what service he will.

2. Gods judgements do often come suddenly and swiftly; wings make a noyse, and wheels do rattle in a moment, and judgements come in an instant, *Hos. 10. 15.* In a morning shall the King of Israel be cut off utterly; *Belshazzar* in a night, *Dan. 5. 30.* *Nebuchadnezzar* in an hour driven from his palace and pride, *Dan. 4. 33.*

3. There is much harmony and love between the Angels; their wings touch, kisse, they go lovingly together in the execution of their offices; they have like affections, as a woman to her sister; they sang sweetly together at the birth of Christ, there is no contention, envie or division among them, but much love, they are near God, and the nearer any are to God, the more love is in them: if wee could agree better, and love more, wee should be Angelicall.

In the 14th Verse is laid down, what the Spirit did with the Prophet, after he had lift him up: *It took him away*; after the Sublation, there was an Ablation. The Prophet was carried by the power of the Spirit to *Tel-abib*; this was not a visionall thing, but reall; for being lifted up, he was taken away from the place where he saw the Vision, he was nowise down, and so left to go to *Tel-abib*, but he was carried in the arms of the Spirit, as Philip was caught up by the Spirit, and carried to *Azotus*, *Acts 8. 39, 40.* The Spirit was the fiery Chariot that carried Philip and our Prophet through the ayre to their severall places.

And I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit.

The Hebrew is, *I went bitter in the hot anger of my spirit*; Here the infirmity of our Prophet appears much, in that after he had seen and heard such great and glorious things, had found such favour in the eyes of Christ, as to have his Spirit enter into him, comfort him, confirm him, and to bestow propheticall gifts upon him, yet now he should be unwilling to obey Christs call, be in bitter-

bitternesse and opposition to his Will ; this is *grandis infirmitas*, If I go and preach of the glory departing from the Temple, I shall stir up the people against me, they will stone me, if not, I shall offend God. The Prophet now thought upon Gods anger against his people ; his departure out of the Temple, the ruine of the City, the stubbornnesse and impudency of the house of Israel ; now the weightinesse of the work, injoynd him by Christ seised upon him ; and now, like *Jonab*, he thought to decline the service, his spirit was bitter, he in a great heat, that he was so pressed to a work so litle affected, and over-powered by the Spirit of God, that will he, nill he, on he must, for the next words are :

But the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.

Which words doe declare, that had not Gods hand over-powered him, he would not have set upon that hard work of the Propheticall office ; feares, difficulties, dangers, carnall reason, unbeliefe, self-love ; one, or all of these, would have turned him back, if the hand of God had not strongly prevailed with him.

By *hand of the Lord*, some understand the Spirit of Prophecy ; as if that did mightily urge him ; so the *Chaldeæ* Exposition is ; others understand by it *divinum auxilium*, or, *virtus spiritus* ; which is as a hand to help ; we may safely understand the Spirit by it, which put forth its mighty power upon, and in the Prophet. Why the Spirit is resembled to a hand, I shewed in the first Chapter, v. 3. A hand is *symbolum energie*, *index rei*, & *instrumentum operationis*, there is strength in the hand ; it shewes what is to be done, and effects it ; so here, the Spirit took hold of the Prophet, which notes his power, shewed him his duty, and caused him to doe it.

Was strong : The Hebrew root signifies, *fortiter apprehendere, tenere*, as one that holds loose joynts and nerves of the body, to strengthen and confirm them, that so the man may be more compact and able to do any thing ; it notes laying hold with strength, as men in danger of drowning ; and the *Septuagint* frequently renders it by a word notes so much ; as *Ex. k 7. 13. 22. 14.* which is to hold by strength ; and this sense suits with the hand of the Lord that took hold of the Prophet, whose spirit was remisse, infirm, like a member out of joynt, and strengthened it, and enabled

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ὕψους.

abled is to do what was intended and appointed ; the *Spiris* held the Prophet by its mighty power, that he could not wrest from it by any means, but like a man conquered, must yeeld, and do what was required.

islas emiau-
ous.

Observ. 1. The Prophets were put on to, and carried on in their works of Prophecie, and giving the Scriptures by extraordinary acts of the Spirit, that enters into *Ezekiel*, takes him up, takes him away with mighty power, comes upon him, and constrains him to prophecie ; here was inspiration and impulsion of the Spirit, 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. *Prophecie came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; it was not their own spirit moved, that is, private, but it was the Spirit of God, which is divine and publique, and carried them on with might ; so that the Scriptures are not inventum humanum, but Oracula Dei, they are not of man, but of God ; therefore Philo saith, Prophetas est interpretes Dei distantis Oracula, the Spirit dictates all, and man onely utters, or writes what is dictated ; and as the Scriptures are not of man, but of the Spirit ; so their interpretation is not of man, but of the Spirit likewise. Let Councils, Fathers, Churches, give their sense of Scripture, it's private, if it be not the sense and interpretation of the Spirit : Let a private man give the true sense of the Scripture, it's not private, because it's divine, the sense of the Holy Ghost, and private in this place of Peter, is not opposed to publique, but to divine ; and the words are to be read, no Scripture is of a mans own interpretation ; that is, private, contrary to divine.*

2. The Holy Ghost is God, and a person distinct from the Son ; the Spirit was in the living creatures, in the wheels, and in *Ezekiel*, how could this be, if the Spirit were not God ? none but God can be at the same time in many places ; its his peculiar prerogative and nature to be every where. The beams of the Sun are in severall places, but not the essence or body of the Sun, that is in one place only, but the Holy Ghost was in its essence, in the Angels, in the wheels, in *Ezekiel*, it was in *Jeremiah*, who lived then at *Jerusalem* ; it was in all the Saints there, in *Daniel*, and the rest of the Saints in *Babylon* ; so that the Spirit is co-essentiall with the Father and the Son, and it's a person ; otherwise how could it have taken up the Prophet, and carried him ? and it's distinct from

from the Son, who is described to be upon the Throne, and to give commands unto the Prophet; and the Spirit here is brought in distinct from him, most cleare in that place in *Matth. 3. 16. 17.* where the Spirit is distinguished from the Son, baptized, and from the Father, acknowledging Christ *in Sonne, in whom hee was well pleased.*

3. Great Saints have great infirmities: *Ezekiel* goes in bitterness, in the heat of his spirit, he was in a froward humour, in a great distemper, the Vulgar hath it, *in indignatione spiritus*, there was indignation in his spirit to the worke; some have thought this affection of the Prophet, *Non prorsus vitiosum*, not altogether sinfull, yet some sinfulness, and vitiosity to be in it, cannot be denied: it's granted by *Calvin*, that it did *distare a gratis spiritus*, and for him after so cleer and strong a Call, to refuse, to be in a chafe, to withstand, was *affectus penitus vitiosus*, if not *vilius*, he had rather have been out of service then in it, lien hid among the people, then have been an Ambassadour of Christ unto them; he had rather they should have perished without Vision, then that himselfe should be a seer amongst them; here was the weakness of this good man. I could tell you of *Abrahams, Jacobs, Moses, Davids, Pauls,* and *Johns* failings: there was never since sin entred, any Saint, *sine omni macula*, in many things we sin all, *Jam. 3. 2.* And yet the Apostles were fill'd with the Spirit, there was a fulness of grace in them, and in the Prophets, yet neither the one nor the other were *omni prorsus exenti carne*, notwithstanding all their graces and excellencies, they did still *terrestre aliquid spirare*; and now where ever the Spirit comes, it neither extinguishes nature nor corruption wholly in this life; the best wine hath its dregs, and its lees, and the best of Saints hath his spots and weaknesses, there is no perfection in any.

4. Holy men, set down their own infirmities, which is an argument of the truth of the Word, and the divine nature of it, men that are meer men seek their own glory, and will not shame themselves in their writings, but the Pen-men of Scripture having received another Spirit, are content to shame themselves, so God, may have glory, his truth credit, his people caution and comfort, all these are in the setting down of their own sins, when holy men confesse their weaknesses, set them down as *Moses, Exod. 4.* as *David*

Psal. 51. as *Jonas*, *Chap.* 1. 4. as *Paul*, *1 Tim.* 1. as *John*, *Rev.* 22. 8. God is glorified by their shame; it's evidenced what God did for, and by these men, notwithstanding their sins, men are perswaded of the truth of the Word, seeing they spared not themselves, and would not bury their own thoughts in silence; others that see the slips of such men of God, are admonished thereby to look to their standings, and to be watchfull, and these are beaten down with the sense of their failings, (see it's the common sickness of the Saints, and not their case alone, which is some ease unto them.

5. That some truths of God, sweet in the reception, oft prove bitter in the operation: the roul that *Ezekiel* did eat, *ver.* 3. was sweet as honey at first unto him; but now he was to goe and put it in practice, he found it bitter, and sought to decline that service, it was like pills sugared over, sweet in the mouth, but being dissolved in his bowels, *viscera terquebat & torminibus lacerabat praeordia*. He was upon the wrack, and sick of the businesse, and perplexed that he had eaten such a roul. The stony ground heard the Word with joy, it was sweet to the taste, but after it was bitter, when persecution and temptation came; those hearers were offended and fell away, *Matt.* 13. 20, 21. the word of joy proved a word of bitterness unto them, and it's so to most men at one time or other, they finde it a sad and difficult thing to act those truths are sweet to the understanding, *Rev.* 10. 9, 10. *John* eat the little book, it was sweet in his mouth, bitter in his belly; that is, in the operation of it; *John* saw that those truths writ in it would beget hatreds, persecutions, imprisonments, banishments, martyrdomes, &c. When we come to finde the operations of truths, that they will cost us deare, deare friends, deare liberties, deare lusts, deare lims, deare lives; we find a bitterness in truths, though formerly they have been like *Ezekiel's* roul, and *John's* little book to our mouths.

6. Mans wisdom and spirit is opposite to the wisdom and Spirit of the Lord Christ. Christ calls, sends *Ezekiel* in his infinit wisdom, he thinks it best for him to goe to the captive *Jews*; this rebellious house. The Spirit enters into *Ezekiel*, assures him of his Call, assumes him, assists him, and yet he is averse, in bitterness, in the heat of his spirit; he shewes the antipathy between his wisdom and Christ's, his spirit, and the Spirit of Christ, they

they closed not. There are principles of opposition in godly men to the wayes of Christ and his Spirit; so far as they are unregenerate, so far they are opposite, *Rom. 8. 7. The carnall minde is enmity against God; it's in the originall, the wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God*, there is flesh in the best men, that flesh hath wisdom, it hath a spirit, (the flesh is the old man, a whole man, and must have a spirit in it to act it, such a one as it is) and both the wisdom and spirit of the flesh are enmity to God, unsubject to his Law and Will; and enmity to man, they work death, and end in death; *Jonas* had such wisdom, and such a spirit in him, when he ran from God; but it had cost him his life, if God had not been more gracious then he dutifull: *Paul* complains, he found a law in his members, warring against the law of his minde, *Rom. 7. 23. Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the spirit*; the work of the flesh is lusting and warring against the Spirit: it is with a godly man, as it was with *Rebecca*, she had great struglings in her womb, and what was the cause of it? there were two Nations in her womb, one contrary to the other; and there is heaven and earth in a godly mans heart, which are contrary, and make great struglings: The same soule commands obedience, opposeth obedience; the same will that delights in the law of God, hath a crosse motion to the law of sin; the heart that trusteth God, doubts of his favour; while we are believing, unbelieve is opposing, *Mark. 9. 24. I believe, Lord help my unbelieve.*

Gen. 25. 22,
23.

7. Saints may do the Will of God unwillingly, if not against their will; *Ezekiel* was in bitterneffe in the heat of his spirit, unwilling to be a Prophet to this people, yet he went, *I went: Jonas* he goes to *Niniveb*, but his heart is not full on the work, there was not a throughnesse in it, he saw there was a necessity of it, God had power to punish disobedience, and could quickly crush him, and therefore now in a prudentiall way, he would goe and prophesie to *Niniveb*; there was in him an unwilling willingnesse, his spirit was not totally willing, as you may gather from *Chap. 4. 1, 2, 3.* He was against the sparing of *Niniveb*; it stuck upon his spirit, that he should lie under the imputation of a false Prophet; he wishes death upon it, which shewes that his spirit was not wholly in the service; we doe the work and will of God oftentimes with great unwillingnesse, as women part with their joyntures, or children;

as Merchants throw their goods overboard in a storm; as many now affected part with their goods to the publique Service, necessity is too strong for them, & prudence puts them on, & their's a willing unwillingness; so it is with the godly, they pray and heare unwillingly, they give unwillingly, &c. this is from the imbecillity of grace, the power of corruption, misapprehension of God, and his wayes, violence of temptations, intanglements with the world, pressures of guilt, and unsuccessfulness of service; let us be sensible of our unwillingnesses in Gods wayes, be humbled for them, and strive to doe all *animo prompto* Deut. 28. 47, 48. *Because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies: it's good for us to have our wills and whole hearts in the worke of God.*

8. The infirmities of Gods people doe not interrupt his love and Grace; Ezekiel went in bitterness, in heat of spirit, *but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.* This great distemper in the Prophet did not distemper God; it did not cause him to retract or divert his love, but he takes hold of him by his hand, and upholds him, as a Parent would do to a Child, falling, or down, the weakness or sickness of a childe doth not estrange the heart of the Parent, it rather enlarges and drawes out the bowells more fully; and so it is with God, Psal. 103. 13, 14. *As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that feare him; and why so? he knowes our frames, he remembers we are but dust; the Lord knowes what weak and frail things we are.* The word for frame, notes a formed vessel of earth, and the Chaldees expounds it, of our evill concupiscence, which carrieth us into error; God knowes that wee are earthen vessels, full of lusts and infirmities, which lead us from him, which disable us to serve him. Now here is the love, bowells, goodness of a God, because we are so, therefore he pitieth us: so Psal. 78. 37, 38. *Their hearts were not right nor stedfast with God, but God was right and stedfast with them, he being full of compassion forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; infirmities may bring crosses, but cannot cut off from mercies; this should strengthen our faith, comfort our hearts, and encourage us with a holy boldness to goe to the Throne of Grace, Heb. 4. 15, 16. Christ, saith the Apostle, is a mercifull high Priest, touched*

with the feelings of our infirmities; and what infers he upon it? Let us go boldly to the Throne of grace, that wee may obtaine mercy, and finde grace in time of need.

9. The Spirit of Christ is the healer and helper of our infirmities: *Ezekiel* was distempered and sick of the busines, and the hand the Spirit of the Lord was strong upon him, that helped, that healed him: 107. 20. He sent out his word and healed them; the Spirit in that word did the cure; and here he sent his spirit to seise upon *Ezekiel*, to work out the ill humour, to settle his thoughts, and sweeten his spirit that was so imbibittered; the Spirit is compared to oil, *Psal.* 45. 7. 1] *Joh.* 2. 27 and that is of a mollifying, cleansing, healing and quickning nature; when Christ was anointed, then he healed the broken hearted, *Luke.* 4. 18. he dropped that oile into their hearts, and that did soften, purge, heale and quicken them. Gifts of healing are attributed to the Spirit 1. *Cor.* 12. 9. and helping our infirmities in prayer is the work of it; *Rom.* 8. 26. the Spirit brings the strength, we are infirm, and can do nothing, but the Spirit, together with us, and for us, takes up the work that we faint not; it answers to the word here, *was strong, tooke bold on me*, bound up my Spirit together, and strengthened me, not suffering my Spirit to run out.

σπαραγμὰ
πῆται.

Lastly, the Spirit works invincibly; *Ezekiel* may struggle, but the Spirit will overcome, that was strong upon him; men would not come in to Christ, and do his work, unlesse a spirit mightier then their own come upon them. Gods Spirit is a Spirit of power, *Luk.* 1. 35. The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; the holy Ghost is the power of the Highest, & when Paul preached, it was in demonstration of spirit and power, 1. *Cor.* 2. 4. and his Ministry was able to beat down strong holds, 2. *Cor.* 10. 4. 5. to cast down all high things, and to captivate thoughts & spirits to the obedience of Christ; the spirit workes invisibly, it's a hand under a wing, and it works invincibly; it's a strong hand, there is none can stand before the strength of it; Antichrist shall be consumed by the spirit of the Lord, 3 *Thes.* 2. 8. This Spirit is fire to consume enemies, it's a hand powerfull to fetch in the friends under election: the Jews are now stiffe enemies of Christ, but when the spirit of grace is powred out upon them, when this hand takes hold of them,

Oportet non
tantum moveri,
sed novum fie-
ri, Prosp.

then they will mourn, come in, submit to Christ; no violence doth the Spirit offer to the wills of men, notwithstanding it works invincibly, it files off the enmity and avernesse of our wills to God, & inclines them to yeeld, *omnipotentis suavitatem, et suavi omnipotentia.*

VER. 15.

Then I came to them of the captivity of Tel-abib, &c.

IN this Verse is the *terminus* of his journey, and his condition at the end of it, mourning and sadnesse.

*Acerum novarum frugum.
Ad opera rusticana exercenda.*

The word *Tel-abib*, signifies a heap of new fruits, or green eares of corn, of *TEL acerum & ABIB spica maturescens*; *Jerome*, and the Vulgar translate it, a heap of new fruit or corne; and *Jerome* thinks the *Jewes* were placed there, to plough, sow, reap, thresh, and that now they were beating out the new corn; but this opinion we cannot admit, for it was in the fourth moneth, *Chap. 1. 1.* that *Ezekiel* had his Vision, and their harvests in those hot countries were not in the fourth moneth, but rather in the first or second. The *Israelites* came out of *Egypt* in the moneth *Abib*, *Exod. 13. 4.* and that was their first moneth, *Exod. 12. 2.* and answered to the latter end of that moneth is call'd *January*, and to the beginning of the other call'd *February*; and in *Exod. 9. 31.* it's said, *the Barley was in the eare*; the word is *Abib*, an eare of corn, and denominates the moneth, because in it the Barley eared; so then it could not be harvest when *Ezekiel* came to them at *Tel-abib*, it was rather over: we take the word for the name of a place, as *Telmelab*, *Telbarfa* *Ezra 2. 59.* in their *Etymologie*, the one signifies a heap of wood, the other a heap of salt; yet by *Ezra* they are call'd places: *these were they went up from Telmelab, Telbarfa, &c.* so *Tel-abib* here: And it was in the middle part of *Mesopotamia*, between two rivers, *Chebar* and *Saocorab*; and here they were placed, as *Junius* thinks, both to secure them, that they might not think of getting away, being shut up between two rivers, or if they did, not easily accomplish it; and secondly, to secure the place, which was subject to inundations, and so uninhabited, and opened to enemies, but now by their labour, art and strength, might be made usefull and defensive.

By the river of Chebar: of that river, was spoken in Chap. 1. ver. 1.

I sat by them, that sate, and remained there astonished seven dayes.

Sitting notes a quiet posture of the body, abiding in a place, Exod. 16. 3. *when wee sate by the flesh pots*, that is, abode, dwelt where we had them. Also great griefe, Lam. 2. 10. *The Elders of the daughter of Sion sit upon the ground and keep silence*; and so in that place in *Isaiah 47. 8. I shall not sit at a widow*, solitary, mourning, in deep sorrow; to which alludes that in *Lam. 1. 1. How doth the City sit solitary? how is she become as a widow?* great grief silenceth the whole man; the tongue speaks not, the body moves not, *Job 2. 13. Job's friends sit down with him upon the ground seven dayes and nights, and none spake a word to him, so they saw that his grief was very great*; so great, it made them all quiet and hush, and seven dayes he sate in that dolefull posture, because they were used to mourn seven dayes in cases of great grief, as *Joseph* mourned seven dayes for his father, *Gen. 50. 10.* and seven dayes mourning is an argument of great grief, and a testimony of much love. If we refer our Prophets mourning, to the condition which the *Jews* were coming to, it might be lawfull, he saw their death and funerall was at hand; and so being sensible, laid it deeply to heart, and bewailed it seven dayes, testifying his good will and affection to them; but if we refer it to his unwillingnesse to goe in the service Christ call'd him to, it is not excusable, but a farther argument of his great weaknesse. The cause of the Prophets sitting there seven dayes, might be to know the state of the people more exactly, to whom he was to prophesie; it might be upon divine command; it might also be for farther direction from God when to begin his Prophecy; a Prophet he was made, but had no time appointed to begin his hard work; it might also be to prepare and awaken the people, that seeing him sit still, sad, amazed, they might inquire what this strange sadnesse meant, and so his word take the deeper impression when he should speak unto them.

Astonished.

The Hebrew word *Masmim*, from *Shamam*, notes great astonishment, even to wonder, *Isa. 59. 16. he wondered that there was no intercession*; it notes also desolation, and may here be rendered,

I sate

*Septemdiarius
luctus est quod-
dam acerbi do-
loris indicium
et benevolentis
animi legiti-
mum argumen-
tum.*

משמים

I fate desolate seven dayes ; the Spirit left me in that place, and men regarded me not, being full of grief, and telling them I had sad newes, so the word is used, *Lam. 5. 18. The mountain of Sion is desolate* ; and thus we may take it : the Vision being ended, the Prophet set down there by the Spirit, and neither seeing, hearing, or having to do now with Christ, the living creature, wheels, or the Spirit, found himself desolate, and was astonish'd at that great change. The *Septuagint* renders it *conversans*, intimating the Prophets meditating, and inward discoursing of the miseries and woes were written in the rooll, and coming upon the people ; the hard task he had to perform among this people.

Observ. 1. That in the place and condition God sets him, they must abide in the same; the Spirit brings *Ezekiel* to *Tel-abib*, there he continues, abides, till the Spirit adviseth his departure ; let him be among captives, between overflowing rivers, he continues and stirs not ; it must not be any slight thing that removes men from the Calling God hath set them in ; Ministers may not at pleasure skip from place to place, as if there were no tie upon them, neither captivity, incorrigibleness of persons, nor discommodity of place are weighty enough to take off *Ezekiel* from that place and people the Spirit had set him over ; when the Holy Ghost hath set men over a flock, they must take heed to that flock, and not seek occasion to be gone upon discontents, &c. the worst are forwardest to remove, the Bramble will leave his place to be King, when the Olive, Fig-tree, and Vine will not stirre ; Christ will not be made a King by intreaty, nor by force.

Exod. 1. 10. 2. The men of this world are politique for their own ends; the captivity were placed at *Tel-abib*, between two rivers, that they might not get away, that they might make that part of the country strong and usefull : worldly men are wiser in their generation then the children of light ; how cunningly did *Pharaoh* deal with the *Israelites* ? Let us work wisely with them, (saith he) they multiply, and we are in danger, lest upon any occasion they take part with our enemies, or make a head of themselves, or attempt an escape ; Come, let us set task-masters over them, wear them out with much work, and imploy them to build Cities for us. Here was the cunning to avoyd the name of tyranny, he will not destroy them with sword, fire, open violence, but work they must
in

in brick and clay, and fall by hard labour; so he covers up his cruelty under a faire pretence, and provides for his own security and profit in the *Israelites* service. Wicked and worldly men are all self, and all their actions draw homewards, they are their own centers; the wisdom of the flesh, of the Serpent, of the world is theirs, and they must needs be crafty for themselves.

3. The condition of the Saints and servants of God is very changeable here. *Ezekiel* hath a glorious Vision, sight of, and converse with Christ, the company of Angels, sees the course and motion of things in the world, had the *Spirit* enter into him, comforting him, assuming and assisting him; and now he is a desolate, an astonished man, he sits as one forsaken of all; here was a great charge, and it was not *Ezekiels* case alone, others, even all the Worthies of God, have found the like: *David* was strong through divine favour, and quickly troubled for the want of Gods face; he had his singings and his sorrowings, *Psal.* 30. he was oft in the valleys, *Psal.* 25. 16, 17. *I am desolate and afflicted; the troubles of my heart are enlarged; and Psal.* 143. *My spirit is overwhelmed, my heart within me is desolate.* *Paul* is one day rapt up into the third heavens, and another day he hath a thorne in the flesh; if he have the revelation of the *Spirit* to exalt him, he hath the buffetings of Satan to humble him; *Paul* himself knew changes.

4. Distempers of spirit fasten and continue oft with the servants of God: *Ezekiel* was in his distemper of bitterness and heaviness of spirit seven dayes; it's not easie to shake off distempers when they have taken hold of us: *Jonas* was in an ill humour and frame of spirit many dayes together; he must be drencht, buried and boyl'd in the Whales bally, ere he will be pliable to the will of God; when *Uzzab* was smitten for his error, *David* was displeased, and in a pet with God himself, and would not bring the Ark in three moneths to *Sion*, 2 *Sam.* 6.

5. Distemperedness of spirit unfits for the service of God; he sits seven dayes, and nothing is done. The Apostle *James* knew this, and therefore said; *Be slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God; wrath darkens the minde, and puts all out of frame: wise men in their wrath see not their wayes nor work, when the lights of reason, truth, and the Spirit is gone, what can a man doe befitting God? wrath makes men*

V u

tungle,

Jam. 1. 19, 20.
Per inan sapientia perditur ut quid quove ordine agendum sit omnino nesciatur.

Greg. 5.
Moral. 30.

*Per iram lux
veritatis amittitur,
Spiritus sancti splendor
excluditur,
ibid.*

*Aquin. 3. p.
q. 15. art. 9.*

*Ubi est ira, ibi
non est Dominus,
sed amica
Satanæ, l. 2.
Confl.*

bungle in their own businesses, much more in the Lords, it works not the righteousness of God, but its own righteousness, that seems right in its own eyes, that shall be done; *Ezekiel* thought it right not to prophesie, not to submit to the will of Christ, and work of the Spirit, but his passion was prejudice to him and so the work of God; it's evill when wrath prevents reason, forceth it to action, then what ever is done, is the work of anger, not of reason, not of righteousness; when wrath hath the kingdome, when that is in the head and heart, there is no place for the righteousness of God: this made *Clem.* say, where wrath dwels, God dwels not. Wrath is a speciall friend of Satans, many of his counsels and designs are effected by it; the more of this humour, the more service hath hell, the lesse of it, the more serviceable for heaven: *Moses* was the meekest man upon the earth, and he did most work for heaven; Christ was meeker then all other, and he did work the righteousness of God effectually, he did work for heaven and earth.

6. That the Prophets could not prophesie at their pleasure; *Ezekiel* sits seven dayes, and there's no prophesying. *Aquinas* hath a question, whether prophecy be a habite; if it were so, it is in the power of man to use it any time, but so could not the Prophet, when the *Shunamites* (שן) was dead, and shee came to *Elisba*, what said he? Her soul is in bitterness, and the Lord hath hid it from me, 2 *Kings* 4. 27. and hath not told me: unlesse the Lord reveale himselfe unto them, *de novo*, the Prophet could not tell things; the School-men therefore conclude, that prophecy is not in the Prophet *per modum habitus*, sed *per modum impressionis transeuntis*, habites are permanent things, but prophecy is a transient thing, as light in the ayr; for as the ayr doth alwayes need a new illumination; so the mind of a Prophet doth alwayes need a new revelation, else the Prophet sits in darknesse, and knowes not more then other men; *Lam.* 2. 9. Her Prophets finde no vision from the Lord; and so in *Psal.* 74. 9. There is no more any Prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long. It was night oft with the Prophets: *Nathan* spake not from heaven, when he bid *David* goe, and do all was in his heart touching the building of God an house; for it is said, that night came the Word of the Lord unto *Nathan*, 2 *Sam.* 7. 3, 4. before he had not a word, and when

when it came, it was not for *David*, but *Solomon*, to build the house; so that it's true which *Gregory* saith, Sometimes the spirit of prophecy is wanting to the Prophets, and their minds are dark; *Samuel* mistook, when he said, Surely the Lords anointed is before him, 1 Sam. 16. 6, 7.

Aliquando Prophetia spiritus deest Prophetis, nec semper corum mentibus praesto est.
Hom. 1. in Ezek.

V E R. 16.

And it came to passe at the end of seven dayes, that the Word of the Lord came unto mee, saying;

17. *Son of man, I have made thee a watch man unto the house of Israel: therefore beare the Word at my mouth, and give them warning from mee.*
18. *When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked, from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity: but his blood will I require at thy hand.*
19. *Yet, if thou warn the wicked, and he turne not from his wickednesse, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soule.*

IN these words, and the rest, to the end of the Chapter, is a new Revelation, made to the Prophet, together with the events following thereupon: or thus;

1. You have the Call of the Prophet to his Office renewed, and that is in the words read, and on to the end of the 21th Verse.
2. Speciall directions and events laid down from the 21th verse to the end of the Chapter.

In the words read, you have,

First, the circumstance of time, when this repetition of his Call, or new Revelation was made, and that was after *seven dayes*, v. 16.

Secondly, his Office specified, which is to be a *watch-man*, v. 17.

Thirdly, the parties he is to watch over, and admonish:

1. In generall laid down, and that is, *the house of Israel*, ver. 17.
2. More particularly:
 1. *The wicked*, vers. 18, 19.
 2. *The righteous*, vers. 20, 21.

V u 2

Fourthly,

Fourthly, the reasons of it, why he must admonish both sorts: The first is, *ab incommodo*, the danger and mischief of it; both they and he shall die if it be not done.

The second, *ab utili*, it may be they will turne upon admonition, and so be saved; If not, yet the Prophet delivers his own soule, and there is advantage by it.

The words in the 16th Verse have little difficulty in them.

At the end of seven dayes.

Junius.

It's probable the sitting still, and silence of the Prophet, was from Sabbath to Sabbath, on that day he had his glorious Vision, and seven dayes after he had a new Revelation, The Word of the Lord came to him; all the six dayes he was solitary, mourning, meditating, and silent, but on the seventh the Lord appeared again unto him; and so after, he had upon Sabbathes, revelations from God.

Observ. 1. That God beares with the weaknesse and distempers of his servants; Ezekiel declines the Call of Christ, shews his great ingratitude, having had such great favours from Christ, seen so much glory, and being commanded once, twice, to go and preach to the house of *Israel*, yet he sits down, is silent, and that seven dayes together; this might have provoked the Lord to great wrath, to have refused him, as a stubborn self-willed man, and made him to say; he would never admit him to be his Prophet, put such honour upon him, intrust him with such great matters, but the Lord beares with his weaknesse, yea, his continued weaknesse: sometimes Gods anger kindles, and breaks our quickly, and that for little things in our eyes and opinions; as the man gathered a few sticks on the Sabbath, he must be stoned to death; those who peeped irreverently into the Ark, the Lord smote 50000 and upward dead for it presently, 1 *Sam. 6.* *Ananias* and *Sappira*, a small matter in our conceits, it was to keepe backe a portion of their goods, and to excuse it with a lie; for this God was wroth, and they died, *Acts 5.* but the weaknesse of his children he beares with, and those great ones.

2. Mans will and weaknesse cannot hinder the efficacy and execution of Gods decree; the Prophets spirit was against this work, he refused, sate still seven dayes together, and would have frustrated

frustrated Gods intention, if he could, but it was decreed in heaven, that decree was efficacious, his will must be brought off, and he must be the man to execute Gods pleasure in a propheticall way to the house of *Israel*; *Jonas* departs, will prejudice Gods designe concerning *Ninivah*, but the Lord knew how to humble him, to fetch him back, being fled, and to make him instrumentall to his ends, notwithstanding his wilfulnesse and weaknesse, *Psal. 33. 9. He commanded, and it stood fast, and vers. 11. The counsell of the Lord standeth for ever*; let there be contrary counsels, wills, commands, they stand not, God brings them to nought, he makes them of none effect; *Prov. 19. 21. There are many devices in a mans heart*; he thinks not to doe this, and not to doe that, and it shall be so and so, *nevertheless the counsell of the Lord shall stand*; he will perfect the work he hath begun in men, and by men, notwithstanding their infirmitie.

3. Spirituall employments must have sedate, quiet, well-composed affections and spirits; the Spirit of Prophecy came not upon *Ezekiel* all the time he was distempered and discontented, but when time had wrought off the distemper, & the ill humor was digested, then was he stirred by the Spirit of prophecy: when the Minstrell was tun'd, then the hand of the Lord came upon *Elisba*, *2 King. 3. 15.* Mens hearts and spirits are like Minstrells, out of order quickly, and long in tuning, and right setting; but the musick is sweetest when the Instrument is best set, then God delights to communicate his Spirit to us, to imploy us. In the night of God appeared to the Patriarchs; then were they most quiet, and fittest to receive instruction. In *Augustus* his dayes, when there was peace throughout the world, then was Christ given, then was he borne. When there is peace throughout the little world, then are we aptest for reception of Christ, his instructions, and readiest for his service; God will not commit weighty and great things to men, without due fittnesse for them. The Prophet had this time deeply to consider of the businesse, and to get himself into such a frame, as might best sort with the Function he was to be in.

4. The Lord doth not leave his long, although they be in distempers; at the end of seven dayes the Word of the Lord came unto him; wee may by our failings and distempers drive away God from us, but he will visite us again; he may be gone all the week,

week, but come again at the end of it ; *Psal. 30. 5.* Gods anger is for a moment, our weeping for a night, and joy in the morning ; it's not long this good Physician will be absent from his Patient, and when he comes, he will comfort and cure.

5. Our Prophet brought not his own, but the Word of the Lord unto the people ; it's his Word must be commended unto them ; Prophets, Apostles, Ministers, are his Ambassadors, and must speak what is given them in Commission: If they go or speak of their own heads, they provoke God and wrong the people ; *Jer. 23. 30. I am against the Prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my word every one from his neighbour ;* the false Prophets would take some sayings of the true Prophets, and mingle them with their own lies and errours, to get the more credit unto them, and sometimes by false interpretations they would wrest the Word to establish their own phantasies ; they would prophesie for their own glory and profit, and this was stealing of the Word ; they did handle the Word *alieno sensu, spiritu & fine*, then God or the true Prophets intended ; so that their word was not conceived to be the Word of God, but their own, and yet they would fasten it upon God, *vers. 31. I am against the Prophets that use their tongues, and say, He saith.* The word is *Lokekim*, which signifies, *lenire, mollicari, dulcorare*, they flattered and smoothed up the people, speaking things pleasing, and said, *He saith* ; they made God the author of their dreams, which the Lord reproves in the 32. verse, and saith, *Behold, I am against them that prophesie false dreames, and doe tell them, and cause my people to erre by their lies, and their lightness, yet I sent them not, nor commanded them ; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord :* people had need look to their teachers, what they are, whether sent of God, and such as speak the truths of God, otherwise they can look for no blessing, no profit ; but when men come in Gods name, and with Gods Word, you may look for great benefit ; you must expect reality : for here are two words, which note realty and being, *debar* is *verbum, & res, jehi, factum est fuit*, Gods words are things of great weight and worth.

הלכות

יהי רבר

V E R. 17.

I have made thee a watch-man.

IN this Verse is the Office of Ezekiel laid down :

First, generally, *a watch-man.*

Secondly, more peculiarly ;

1. He must learn of Christ.
2. Warn the people.

A watch man.

Tzopheb is from *Tzaphab*, to watch, to see from a high place, to look about on every side, to observe accurately ; as in *Prov. 15. 3.* *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* The word for beholding is *Tzaphobh*, the same with that in the Verse, and notes Gods exact and accurate eyeing of things ; and it's metaphorically taken from those that are set in watch-towers, whose office is to observe with the eye, and intention of minde, what danger is in preparation, approach, or execution, and to inform the City, Town or Army, to which he is a watch-man, that all may timely look to themselves. If any fire, robbery, treachery, invasion, or danger whatsoever appeared, the watch-men were wont to give notice by signes or voice, both in the night and day, and that constantly ; such was the Prophet to be here unto the house of *Israel*, he was to fore-see and fore-tell the dangers were threatned, prepared, approaching, in execution ; and this he was to do constantly, according to that in *Isaiah 21. 8.* *I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day-time, and I am set in my ward whole nights ;* so *Gen. 31. 40.*

There were two sorts of watchmen God set in his Church ; extraordinary, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists ; and ordinary, Pastors and Teachers ; these continue to this day, and these watch for the good of souls, *Heb. 13. 17.* and their office is as the Prophets, to learne of Christ, and to warn the people : the other are ceased.

Observ. 1. The goodnesse and bounty of Christ, that converseth with, and communicates unto the sons of men his precious truths and counsels ; *Son of man*, saith Christ, *I have made thee,* &c. It had

had been honour to Ezekiel to have had an Angel conferre with him, and impart secrets to him ; it's a great matter to have a Prince talk kindly to his subject, tell him his counsels and purposes ; what was it then for our Prophet , to have Christ, the Lord of Angels, and King of kings to speak lovingly to him, to tell him of heavenly mysteries ? And thus he doth to us in his Word, that yet never saw his face, there he opens himselfe sweetly to us, all things being written for our instruction,

2. It's Christs Prerogative to appoint Watch-men in the Church : *I have made thee a watch-man* ; hee might not make himself one ; others without Christs Commission and directions, might not have made him one ; men should not come into the watch-tower, except call'd, *Heb. 5. 4.* if he doe , he will prove neither good watch-man, nor good work-man. Christ himself is the great Watch-man of the Church, he is the Head, and appoints who shall be in his stead ; *2 Cor. 5. 20.* the Apostles were in his stead ; so the Prophet here, so are all the faithfull Ministers of the Gospel, who are call'd mediately by the Church according to his will.

3. The Ministers of Christ must be men of knowledge ; they are watch-men, and watch-men must have eyes in their heads, they must not be blinde : in *1 Sam. 9. 9.* they are call'd *Seers*, if they have no eyes, they cannot be *Seers*, & if not *Seers*, not watch-men, and then mischief may befall the Church suddenly, and that without remedy ; if the blind lead the blind they may both fall into the ditch ; *Isa. 9. 16.* *The leaders of this people cause them to erre, and they that are led of them are destroyed.* Ignorance causeth error, and error destruction ; therefore said the Apostle to the Elders of Ephesus, *Take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you over-seers*, *Acts 20. 28.* unto which, and over which you are overseers, *Inspectors*, or Watch-men ; the *Septuag.* renders it here in our Prophet, *ἐκβητορ*, and *Orig.* calls a Bishop or watch-man, *sculum Ecclesie*, and *Psal. 109. 8* *Let another take his office*, the word *office* is from *Pacer*, which is to visit ; and visiting cannot be without eyes, without knowledge ; if a watch-man want eyes and knowledge, how can he discern danger, instruct the ignorant, plaster the wounded, reduce the straying, lift up the fallen, feed the hungry, comfort the feeble, resolve conscience,

and

innotatus,
Si in laicis vi-
deretur intoler-
abilis infirmitas,
quanto magis
in his qui prae-
sunt, nec excu-
satione est dig-
na, nec venia ?

Leo. Ep. Const.

and compare things past with things present and future: a watchman, a Minister, should be like *Argus*, whom the Poets say, had an hundred eyes, they should be full of eyes; the beasts about Christs Throne were full of eyes, before and behinde, *Rev.* 4. 6. they saw things gone, and things to come; they saw every way: Ignorance is blameable in any, but chiefly in a watchman; Papists say, Ignorance is the mother of Devotion, but the *Toletan* Council tells them otherwise. Ignorance is the mother of all errours, and chiefly to be avoyded in the Ministers of God, who have taken upon them the office to instruct the people of God. *The Papists lips should keepe knowledge*, not ignorance, *Mas.* 2. 7. Let Antichrist have ignorant Priests, blind watch-men, Christ must have knowing, judicious, seeing watch-men, *They are men of God, througly furnished*, 2 Tim. 3. 17.

Dist. 38. c. 1g.

4. Ministers must not be sleepy, drouzie persons; they are watch-men, and it's not enough to have eyes in their heads, but their eyes must be open; not sufficient to have knowledge, but that must be improved; the wakefull Geese did better service then the sleepy watch-men: *Matth.* 13. 25. *While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares.* By men *Jerome* and *Augustine* understand the officers of the Church, and by their sleeping their carelesnesse and negligence in their place: wicked ones took advantage to sow tares, errors, and heresie, while they were remisse. The same word that is for a *Seer*, is for a *Sleeper*, *Chosim*, because if men see not to purpose, they are no better then sleepers, such watchmen *Isaiah* speaks of, *Chap.* 56. 10. *His watchmen are blind, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber*; when the Shepheards sleep, then the Wolves watch, walk and devour, *Acts* 20. 29. *I know, that after my departure shall grievous Wolves enter, not sparing the flock; therefore watch*, saith he, v. 31. intimating, that if there be not watching of the Shepheards, there will be fearfull spoiling of the sheep; the sleepinesse of the Shepheards is the joy of the Wolves; *Luk.* 12. 37. *Blessed are those, &c.*

*Somnolentia
Pastorum est
gaudium Lu-
porum, Eph-
rem tract de
timore Dei.*

5. If Watchmen, then they must indure hardships, all winds and weathers, the cold of the night, and heat of the day; they must look for succession of good and bad. *Isa.* 21. 11, 12. *Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, the morning cometh, and also the night.* It was now night with the watch-men, there were troubles, afflictions, sadding things; but there was a morning of hope,

hope, and after that an evening of sorrows; changeable conditions which the watchman must indure; 2 Tim. 2. 3. Paul counsels Timothy to indure hardnesse as a good Souldier of Christ. Souldiers must not only stand sentinell in the night, and day, but go upon desperate services; such a watchman was Paul, 2 Cor. 11. 23. to the 30th. He saith, *In stripes he was above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft, five times he had forty stripes save one, thrice was he beaten with cords, once stoned, thrice he suffered shipwracks, a night and a day in the deeps, in perils every where, in wearinesse, painfulness, watchings, fastings, cold, nakedness, &c.* The scouts and sentinels are exposed to the greatest hazards, they are taken first; you know the Ministers are the men stricken at in these dayes, they are likeliest to meet with the first and greatest dangers; Josh. 3. when the people were to go through the waters of Jordan, the Levites and Priests were first to go in, and to stand therein till all the people passed over; it's the watchmen are to meet with the waters of affliction, and to stand in them.

6. That the Church and people of God, the house of Israel are subject to dangers, enemies, otherwise what should a watchman need? cities, armies do not send out scouts and watchmen, if there were no enemies; where there is watching and warding, you may be sure of it there is danger. The Church is like a Ship, tossed at sea among rocks, sands, with winds and waves, and needs the most skilfull Pilot to direct and steer it; it's like a Lamb among Lions, and needs the most watchfull Shepheard; they were in much danger in Babylon amidst scoffing enemies, and the Church is not safe in *Sion*, her children are the Wheat, and the world thresheth them; they are the Vine, the Clusters, and the wicked rend, presse, tear them; what is the colour of the Church but black? Schismes have so divided her, Errors so shaken her, Heresies so tossed her, and Persecutions so battered her, that shee is black and blew, and hardly a sound part left in her. The Church is besieged with devils and wicked men, open enemies, secret hypocrites, indangered daily; out of its own bosome and bowels doe those arise that threaten the ruine of it daily, *Act.* 20. 30. the Church hath bred *Eutychians, Nestorians, Pelagians, Antitrinitarians*, and a generation of Vipers in our dayes, that under pretence of the Church, would eat up the true Church; and certainly it had been

been done, if wee had not had a better watchman then *Ezekiel*; *Iſa. 27. 3. I the Lord do keep it, left any hurt it, I will keep it night & day.*

7. The watchmen are not for themselves, but for the flock, for the whole; *I have made thee a watch-man to the house of Israel*, not some particular person, not some part, not to half, but *to the house of Israel*; when one is become a watchman, he hath a great trust committed to him, and must look to that, the welfare of the whole depends on him: as a man, as a Christian he may foresee danger, and hide himselfe, but as a watchman he may not foresee it, run away and leave the flock to spoil, he must discover it, discharge the trust reposed in him, and see to the safety of the whole, with the hazard of himselfe; if he doe not so, he will shew himselfe a treacherous watchman, a false, fearful, self-seeking Prophet; the good of *Sion*, and not of self should be aimed at in every Prophet, in every Minister; but wee may take up the Apostles complaint in *Phil. 2. 21. all seeking their own*, and not the things be Jesus Christs, not his Gospel, his Church, his Government; *Paul* had the care of all the Churches upon him, *2 Cor. 11. 28.* And for *Corinth*, he sought not theirs, but them, *Chap. 12. 14.* their safety, their peace, comfort, growth in knowledge, in faith, in all spirituall excellencies; and why? he looked upon them as his children, his bowels, his heirs, and therefore would communicate all he could to them, and do what was in his power for them. Hence he saith in the 15th verse, *I will very gladly spend, and be spent for you*; the former word *sawarhew*, notes to be at cost with them, to take some pains; he would pray for them, preach to them, write to them, do much; but the other word notes the spending of all; so that he would keep back nothing at all, his state, his strength should goe, so that he would empty himself wholly; and when that was done, then his spirit, his blood, his life should go; Besides that false Apostles or teachers will do, *I will do more*; if they will give you of their estates, you shall have all mine; if they will take paines, I will take more; if they will venture their liberties to do you good, I will venture my life and all for you; let them go far, I will go beyond them, gladly will I be spent for you; it's for your souls, not for your estates; and though he should get nothing by it, he would do it, though they should love him the lesse; here's a great Apostle, of a greater

ἐκ δαπάνης
σώματα ὑμῶν σώω
ἵνα ὑμᾶς ὑμῶν.

Super impen-
dar.

spirit, and of the greatest charity, he was carefull of all those he was a watchman unto, faithfull in seeking their good ; and should be a precedent unto us.

Now I come to the two particular duties of the watchman, laid down in the Verse :

Therefore heare the word at my mouth, there is the first ;

And give them warning from me, there is the second.

Observ. 1. That none have such a sufficiency of light, knowledge, grace, but they must depend upon Christ for more ; *Ezekiel* had seen and heard much, the Spirit entred into him, he had eaten the roul, yet he must attend upon Christ, and heare the word at his mouth ; no Prophet, no Apostle, no Minister hath a perfection of knowledge, or knoweth the whole minde of Christ ; *Paul* studied to know Christ more and more ; and so did other Apostles, if they had not received daily, they could not have given daily.

2. The Ministers must learn as well as teach, heare before they speak ; and it's Christ they must heare, of him they must learn ; *Thou shalt heare the word at my mouth* : they must have a word, but it must be a word of Christ ; he spake immediately to *Ezekiel*, he speaks in his Word to us : *Matth.* 17. 4. *Heare him*, saith the Father ; and why ? *he is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, what he saith is truth, he had it from my bosome, out of my counsels, and it's pleasing unto me ; therefore heare him : and *Mat.* 23. 8. *One is your Master, Even Christ* ; he is the only teacher, according to the mind of God ; he is the leader in the way, in the right and good way. Then Prophets & Ministers must learn, and be learned, but their learning is not to be fetch'd from *Aristotle*, *Justinian*, *Machiavil*, from Traditions, Fathers, or Councils, but from Christ. Ministers are watchmen, and therefore they must heare the Word at Christ's mouth ; they must inform the Church and people of God in nothing he speaks not, and warrants not ; you have an excellent place in *Habbak.* 2. 1. *I will stand upon my watch, and see mee upon the Tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me.* The Prophets eye and eare were towards God, he cared not what the people and false Prophets said, desired, determined, expected, but he only looked at God, he would see, what he did, heare what he said, which way he moved, and take all his light from him, and

rebyndre,
Doctor, or
dux via.

and then he knew he should not erre, he should not wrong any; and it follows, *The Lord answered me and said*, the Prophet durst not give out any thing to the Church, till the Lord first gave out to him; & when ought was revealed to him, he durst not keep it back. If Prophets might not bring what they had not from the mouth of God, how shall we dare to do it? they sin greatly, who obtrude upon the Church the wills and decrees of men, as authenticall.

3. That it's the office of Prophets and Ministers to premonish their people, to foresee danger, and foretell them. The word *Sabaz*, properly signifies to shine, enlighten, to make cleere as the Sun, and metaphorically, to admonish, because he is admonished, is enlightened. Ministers must deal plainly and clearly with sinners, convince them of their sins, and the punishments are threatned against them: Ministers must not daub and sow pillows under mens elbows; but as it's in *Isaiah* 58. 1. They must cry aloud, and not spare, they must lift up their voice like trumpets, and shew the people their transgressions, and the house of *Jacob* their sins. The word *shew* them, notes a setting of them before their faces; so that they must see, and take notice of them, and the danger they subje& unto; the Ministers must not spare any, not great ones, not the greatest, the house of *Jacob* must be told of them; and *Ezekiel* is a watchman to the house of *Israel*, to the Kings, Princes, Nobles, great, small, to all; therefore all must be warn'd. *Chrysostome* told *Eudoxia* the Emperesse of her sins, and spared not for her greatnesse; shee had set up a silver Statue, about which the people exercised vain and needlesse sports, which tended to the disgrace of the Church, and for this he dealt roundly with her; it's the Prophets fault, that Princes and great ones are so bad, they seldome heare of their own sins, or Gods truths.

4. The Prophets and Ministers of Christ are to do their office in the name of Christ; Thou shalt give them warning from mee, not from thy selfe, not in thine own name. Christ, when he was upon the great work of redeeming man, and revealing the Gospel, said, he came in his Fathers name, *Job* 5. 43. And did his work in his Fathers name, *Job* 10. 25. God sent the Son, and he did all in his name; Christ sends Prophets, Apostles, Ministers, and they must preach and work in his name, because what they aske in his name, they receive, it's done for them; and what they do in his name abides, is blessed, *Job* 15. 16. This should prevail with people

Qui patrum placita, conciliorum decreta, & visiones hominum pro verbo Dei Ecclesie obtrudunt.

Qui admonetur, illustratur & de rebus futuris edocetur.

to receive the Messengers of Christ as his Messengers, as those come in his name, what ever their message be, conviction of sin, denouncing of judgement; saith *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *Wee pray you in Christs stead*; and here *Ezekiel* must warn them from Christ, be it matter of comfort, or terror, all must be done in Christs name and stead, and they entertained as those that are sent of Christ, and come from him: it's good for us so to do; for in receiving them, we receive Christ, and that's not all; wee receive the Father also that sent Christ, *Matth.* 10. 42. A Minister is good company when he brings God and Christ with him, and there is nothing lost by receiving any Messenger of Christ the right way: *vers.* 41. *He that receives a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward*; you must not receive a man because he is learned, witty, of note, akin unto you, because he is ingaged to you, or you to him, because you have some design upon him, but you must receive him in the name of a Prophet, because he belongs to Christ, is sent out by him, and comes in his name; and then you shall have a Prophets reward, you shall profit by his Doctrine, he shall blesse you in the name of Christ, his prayer shall be available for you; the widow of *Sarepta* lost nothing by entertaining *Elijah*, nor the *Shunamite* by receiving *Elisba*; their presence and prayers did much advantage them. But you may take the words thus: a Prophets reward, that is, the Prophets have a great, hard, and glorious work in hand; and they shall have an eminent reward in heaven: and seeing you receive them as Prophets in my name, notwithstanding all the reproach, discouragements they meet with, and danger their Doctrine brings; seeing you encourage them, and help on their work, you shall have such reward as they have, be received into the same Mansion I receive them.

*Non quia dives,
potens, amicus.*

1 King. 17.
2 King. 4.

V E R. 18, 19.

When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, &c.

IN these Verses, is a more particular object of his office, viz. *The wicked*, whom he must tell of his sin, or die for it; here was the operation of the *Roul*, sad and bitter work in the thoughts and apprehensions of the Prophet.

When I say unto the wicked.

God speaks not immediately unto the wicked, how then is it here said, *When I say, &c.* God sometime speaks to them by their conscience, which tells them from God, that they are guilty, and shall dye. But this reaches not the sense of the words; it may be thus taken; *When I say to the wicked*; that is, in my Word; God speaks to all wicked men in his Word, & there it's evident d what is the portion of every sinner; but yet there is somewhat more in this phrase: *When I say to the wicked*, that is, of the wicked, *thou shalt die, and thou givest him not warning, &c.* That in Heb. 1. 7. *Of the Angels he saith*, in the originall is, *to the Angels*, אמרתם אליהם but the sense is *of the Angels he saith*; and so here, *to the wicked*, is אמר אליו *of the wicked*; or, if this be not full enough, you may take it thus; *When I suggest to thee by my Spirit, that the wicked shall dye, and thou dost not give him notice thereof, &c.*

Thou shalt surely die.

Mosh samuth, in dying *thou shalt die*, that is, *thou shalt certainly die*; amongst the Hebrewes, where there is repetition of the word by an Adverb, Gerund, Participle, or the Verb it self, it ever increaseth the signification of the first word; 1 King. 8. 13. *I have surely built thee an house*; it is in the Hebrew, *In building I have built thee an house*; so in 1 Sam. 26. 25. *Thou shalt do great things, and shalt also still prevail*; the Hebrew is, *faciendo facies, & valendo valebis*, in doing thou shalt do, in prevailing thou shalt prevail: by such duplication of the words, the signification is intended, and so in these words, *thou shalt surely die.*

In

In his iniquity.

That is, *for his iniquity*; so the Preposition ב *Beib*, it must be understood, if he would take notice of his sin, repent and leave it, he should not die; but because he goes on in it, he shall die for it: *Hosea 12. 12.* there you finde *Israel* served for a wife; the Hebrew is *Beishbab*, in a wife; but the sense inforceth it to be rendred *for a wife*, and so here, *for his iniquity*.

באשה

His blood will I require at thy hand.

His death shall be imputed unto thee, and thou shalt answer for it, I will charge it upon thy head, and deal with thee as a murderer, thou hast shed his blood, and I will avenge it on thee; so the word *require* imports, *Gen. 9. 5.* Surely your blood of your lives will I require, &c. *Require* is thrice in that Verse; and what is meant by *requiring the blood*, or *life of man*, is fully exprest in the next Verse, *Who so sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed*; so then when blood is shed, and life is lost, Gods requiring of it is to have blood for blood, and life for life; he that sheds blood, or suffers blood to be shed, when he may prevent it, he shall be responsible for it. God is wronged by shedding of blood, and will have satisfaction for it; therefore he is said to make inquisition for blood, *Psal. 9. 12.* Gods requiring, mentioned, *Dent. 18. 19.* is expounded by *Peter, of destruction*, *Acts 3. 23.*

What death is meant in this Verse, is doubted among Interpreters; whether the death of the body, or of the soul, or of both; the Ancients interpret it of the death of the soul, the soul of the wicked going on in his sin, and of the Prophet neglecting his duty, shall die for it: some later Expositors would have it meant of the death of the body, some temporall judgement to cut them off by; but we see many ill Prophets, that neglect to warn the wicked of their evil wayes, and many wicked men go on in their sinfull courses, and neither taken away by temporall judgements: the young Prophet was slaine by a Lion, *1 King. 13.* because he was lesse faithfull then he should have been; and *Jonas* was cast into the deeps, buried in the belly of a Whale, because he declined the service of the Lord; but these were extraordinary acts and chastisements, not *vindictæ*, true, reall punishments. I conceive therefore by
death

death is meant all calamities leading unto death, and the death of soul and body at last, if faith and repentance did not intervene; if eternall death be due to the sinner, dying in his sin, it's threatned to the Prophet for not telling him of his sin, otherwise a temporall punishment for an immortall soul, lost eternally by the negligence of the Prophet, should be all the recompence made, and that is not *compensatio sufficiens*, nay, frequently there should not be any, for ill and idle Prophets do live as long, as healthfully and happily as others, and die without any hand of God observable upon them.

Observ. 1. The Lord Christ knowes who are wicked and vile; we guesse at men, and presume oft wrongfully they are such, but the Lord knowes who are such in truth, and is not deceived; he knowes the Goats and Swine as really as the Sheep and Lambs, he can distinguish between the vile and precious, between his jewels and the reprobate silver, he never mis-titles or miscalls any, he knew the Scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites, and therefore call'd them so; he knew that Judas was a Traytor, and therefore branded him with that name: he call'd Herod a Fox, Nathanael a true Israelite, and in neither was he mistaken; 2 Tim. 2. 19. *The Lord knoweth them that are his*, yea, and those that are not his; Christ could tell Ezekiel what the people of Israel were better then himselfe that dwelt amongst them, he told him they were *Briers, Thornes, Scorpions, a rebellious House*, if all the world besides had said so, and not Christ, it had been no great matter, the world is full of errour, it mistakes; but when the Lord himself, who is infallible, shall pronounce a man wicked, then is he wicked indeed, there is great weight in it, let us look to it; what he saith in his Word of us; if he call us wicked, proud, froward, &c. we are so.

2. The power of life and death is in Christs hand; *when I say to the wicked, Thou shalt die*, he hath authority over their lives, and can at his pleasure pronounce them dead men, *Act.* 3. 15. *he is the Prince of life*; and *Rev.* 1. 18. *he hath the keys of hell and death*, he can see out the soul from the body, and let it into hell when he will. The life of man which is most deare to him is at the will of another; He spake with authority, when he said, *Bring those mine enemies that will not have mee to rule o. er them, and slay them before mee*, Luk. 19. 27. When men are arm'd with power over our lives, they are much feared: Judges, when they go forth

Y y

to

*Hoc loco accipi-
tur sanguis pro
anima damna-
tione, licet etiam
pro corporis ca-
de & pernici-
e possit intelligi.
Pint. in loc.*

*Non eadem est
sententia tribu-
nalis Christi &
angeli susurro-
num, Jer. Ep.
39.*

to keep Assizes, make Counties to quake; and Princes, when they go forth to war, make Kingdomes tremble. Now *Psal. 2. 10, 11,* Kings and Judges are commanded to serve him with feare, to kisse him with subjection, lest he be angry, and command them to be slain, or tell them they shall die. If Kings and Judges that make others feare, must feare the Lord Christ, and submit unto him, how should all under them do it then? Christ knows us, what we are, how we have sinned, what we deserve, and can in a moment destroy us, or proclaim in our consciences that we shall die in our iniquities, and eternally suffer for them; It was he awakened *Judas's* conscience, and set it on fire, let out his life, and sent his soul to perdition; Be you great or small, he is the Lord, he is ruler of the Princes of the earth, all power is in his hand; and though he be the Lamb of God, yet he is also the Lion of the Tribe of *Judas*, and can shake Kingdomes, consciences with his voyce, let us feare before him.

3. When Christ sends Prophets and Ministers, he doth not denude himself of his power, and authorize them to condemn or absolve at their pleasure, they must depend upon Christ, heare him speak, and say of the wicked, *Thou shalt surely die*; before they pronounce a man a dead man, a wicked man: their power is declaratorie, and if Christ do not declare to them, they must not declare against others; *Jam. 4. 12. There is one Law-giver, who is able to save, and to destroy*; Who art thou that judgest another? none have power to make or impose Lawes upon the good or the bad, but Christ, all others must have warrant from him, be they Princes or Prophets; and why? It's he that hath the power to save and to destroy, not they, and therefore it follows; Who art thou that judgest another? it's arrogancy and boldnesse in any, to step into Christs place, and impose any lawes, decrees, or inventions of men upon the consciences of others, or to judge the conditions of men without warrant from Christ and his Word; Prophets may not do it, much lesse others. Hence, what the Prophets, and all Ministers say, must be examined, to the Law, and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them, no morning, (saith the Hebrew) because Christ hath not appeared unto them, warranted them, and then their impositions and censures have no weight in them, and we may prudentially refuse them.

4. The

4. The fruit of sin is death; if wickedness be found in men, death will be threatned from God; wickedness calls for its pay, and that is death: *If I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; when mans wickedness clamors in heaven, Christ will cause the sound of death to be heard on earth; Rom. 6. 23. The wages of sin is death; the word is ^{of labor} *of labor*, and properly signifies what ever is edible with bread, and Synecdochically the wages or salarie of Souldiers, and it suits in both senses with our purpose: sin is a work, and a work of darkness, a work of the flesh, Gal 5. 19. and they commit it are workers of iniquity, Psal. 55. and it's equity that work-men should have meat and wages, and here is both, death is the delicates that the sinner hath to feed upon, and death the wages that the sinner earns, such meat and wages he is sure to have: others may misse of both, work and have no meat, work and go without wages; but this work-man, the wicked man, he shall never misse of either of these, *he shall surely die*, his meat and wages shall not be with-held; mans own sin will slay him, Prov. 5. 22.*

Eph. 5. 11.

5. The Prophets and Ministers of Christ, must not only warn the people, but warn them oft, warn them themselves, and speak to warn, put on others also to do it; they must not be slack, remisse in this business; they must do it earnestly, constantly, use all means to regain the wicked; the repetition of the words imports so much; if thou givest him not warning, nor speaks to warn; he must be solicitous and frequent in the work; Paul knew it, and therefore counsels Timothy, not only to preach the Word, but to be instant, in season and out of season; carnall reason counts preaching unseasonable, that is, upon week dayes and occasionall; but the servants of God must take all opportunities to warn sinners of their evill courses, and to win souls; Christ forbore his meat and drink, and Paul his sleep, to preach unto the people: flesh and blood judges night preaching unseasonable, if not unlawfull, but Paul thought it not unseasonable to preach even till midnight to do them good, he was a night preacher and a day preacher, *vers. 3 1.* saith he, *by the space of three yeeres I ceased not to warn every one night and day*, such was his vigilancy & diligence; he was exceeding carefull to prevent evill, and to do them good, Phil 3. 18. he told them often of the same thing, and warn'd them to take heed of the same men.

2 Tim. 4. 2.

Acts 20. 7.

6. There is hope of wicked men, that live in dissolute wayes; before, the Lord term'd them a *rebellious nation, impudent children, stiff-hearted, Briers, Thorns, Scorpions, most rebellious, that rebellious house*; and here he calls them *wicked ones*; and yet they must be warn'd, that they may returne from their wicked wayes and live; some are hopefull and curable, where wickednesse prevails generally, and all seeme desperate: *Manasses* was as wicked a King as lived, a great Idolater, a great dealer with Inchanters, Wizards and familiar Spirits, a great seducer of the people, to make them do worse then the Nations did, a great shedder of innocent blood; so that the Text saith, *he did wickedly above all that the Amorites did, a King 21. 11.* yet this great sinner found mercy, greater then all his sins; *2 Chron. 33. 12, 13.* *he humbled himself greatly*, he prayed, and God was intreated of him; he is wicked one day, may turn another day; he may become penitent and believing the next day, that is cursing, blaspheming this day, as in *Saul*; some come in early, at the third, sixth, ninth hour, others late, at the eleventh and twelfth; the Thief came in at the last hour; let times be never so corrupt, persons desperately wicked, yet there is hope, and God may have a seed amongst them, let us throw the net off, we may catch fish in *mari mortuo*.

7. The end and scope of a Prophet and Ministers labours must be to save life; he must warn the wicked, that so he may save his life, preserve his soul; *Paul* tells *Timothy*, that by preaching and continuing in the Word, he should save himselfe, and those that heard him, *1 Tim 4. 16.* Mens lives and souls are in great danger daily, Errours, Heresies, Lusts, Temptations, threaten ruine and destruction to men continually; the work and care of the Prophets is, to secure them from these, and to recall them from their sinfull practices: *Jam. 5. 20.* *He that converts the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sinnes*: that which *Ezekiel* calls the sinners wicked way, *James* calls the error of his way, his sinfull manners, actions, courses, opinions, humors, affections and principles; from these must the servant of God labour to deliver him. It's Ministers work, and the end of the Ministry, to save souls; therefore,

First, their scope must not be to shew learning, wit, eloquence, *1 Cor. 1. 17.* The Apostle preached, *but not with wisdom of words*; not

not with excellency of speech, Chap. 2. 1. not with enticing words of mans wisdom, ver. 4. and he gives the reason of it; lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect, that is, lest men should think they are saved, rather by vertue of mans wisdom then Christs passion; or as it's more fully in Chap. 2. ver. 5. that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, it will go off from one to another, as men are more witty, and hold out the truth, in finer and more enticing expressions, which will prove evil; therefore he declined the wisdom of men, and preached in demonstration of the Spirit, that their faith might stand in the power of God, in such conviction and operation of the Spirit, as might breed invincible steadfastness in them.

*Regnum Dei
non in eloquen-
tia, sed in fide
constat.*

Secondly, not to please men; Gal. 1. 10. *Do I seek to please men?* if that were my end, I should not be the servant of Christ; but he must serve Christ in saving of souls, not in pleasing of men, when that is propounded unto men, they will subject truth to mens humor, and become flatterers; but Ministers must not doe so, not frame their Sermons according to mens humors and minds: Jer. 15. 19. *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them;* do not thou comply, debase the truth to please them, but speak as the Oracles of God, and let them please or provoke, it matters not; the provoking of them may be the neereft way to their salvation, and that is thy end.

Thirdly, not to get a living; that is not the end of a Prophets office, it's to make men living men, to save their lives and souls, Paul preached the Gospel without charge to any, and told the Corinthians, he sought them, not theirs, their souls, not their substance; yet he denies not, but that they that preach the Gospel, should live of it, 1 Cor. 9. 14. It's fit Preachers should have maintenance, and sufficient, but the end of preaching is not a living, but life; the life of sinners, to save, to deliver them; seeing this is the end of their calling, how should it quicken them to their work? If a Sheep were in a pit, a childe in a fire, what hast would we make to pull them forth? and shall we see souls rushing into the eternall pit, the eternall fire, and not move our feet, our tongues to help them?

*Calit Asina,
Et est qui sub-
levert eam, perit
anima Et nemo
est qui repareret,
Bern.*

8. The office of a Prophet and Minister is honourable; it's to save life, to save souls, their Calling is conversant about the lives and soules of men; the soule is the immediate work of God, the

Inige

*Magna res ani-
ma qua Christi
sanguine re-
dempta est,
Bern. Ep.*

ἐν ἐργῶν.

In Obad.

Image of God, of more worth then all the world ; it was for the souls sake, but Christ came down from heaven, prayed, preached, wrought miracles, suffered death, and gave his heart-bloud ; this made the Father say, Precious is the soul, being redeemed with Christs bloud ; and being a thing of such worth and consequence, the Ministers work is to save it ; that very work which is the Lords and Christs, therefore in 1 Cor. 3. 9. the Apostle saith of himself, and all Ministers, *Wee are labourers together with God*, co-workers, concurrent with God in the salvation of sinners ; this is great honour, and made Jerome say, *Ipse Salvator Apostolos suos mundi esse voluit salvatores*, Christ hath made Apostles saviours of the world ; he calls them the *light* and *salt* of the world, they inlighten the blind, and season the unfavoury souls of men, and so save them from corruption and perdition ; it's an hard, but an honourable work ; therefore saith James, *Let him know that hath converted a sinner, that he hath saved a soul from death*, Jam. 5. 20. let him know it, it's a great and glorious work is done, that he may be encouraged, and God be praised.

9. Ignorance will be no plea for wicked men ; if they be not warn'd, not told of their sins, they shall die : men are apt to excuse themselves, they are ignorant, they know not this or that to be sins, their Teachers were insufficient or negligent : and this may be truth ; but neither their fault, nor thy ignorance will be a sufficient plea before God, warn'd or unwarn'd, the wicked shall die : *Isa. 27. 11. It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour* ; Nescience may excuse in part, but ignorance hardly at all ; that which men produce in favour of themselves, God produces against them ; you are an ignorant people, saith God, of no understanding, you know not *prima principia*, neither God nor your selves, and think because you are ignorant, therefore to find mercy and favour at my hands, but you are deceived, your ignorance aggravates your woe ever ; therefore will I shew you no mercy, no favour ; those are ignorant of God and his wayes, God will be ignorant of them in their greatest straits, *Depart from me, I never knew you*, Matth. 7. 23. Ignorance is a great evil, it makes men brutish, like *Nebuchadnezzar*, who had an Oxe heart in a mans shape : ignorance is part of the Devils image, as knowledge

is of Gods; wee should labour therefore to get knowledge, favour and saving; for it's not good that the heart be without knowledge, *Prov. 19. 2.*

10. See here who are the most cruell, bloody, and damning Ministers, even those that are silent, that warn not the people of their sins, that preach flattering things, or to no purpose; let men be dumb, and not speak at all, or preach, so as not to warn them of their sins and dangers, they are, who ever they be, whether the greater or lesser Clergie, as they use to distinguish themselves, they are the bloody, damning, soul-murthering Ministers; you cry out of those Ministers that tell you most of your sins, that set judgement, hell and damnation before you, they be bitter, harsh men, cryed out of on all sides; whereas they are the faithfullest friends that sinners have; they would fain save your soules, pull you out of the pit, keep you out of hell, and help you into heaven, and are they censurable for this? should one see a company of travellers going in a way they should fall into the hands of Cavaliers or Thieves, and tell them the danger of it with great affection and compassion, should another see them, and say nothing, or bid them go on, and they do so, are taken, stript, imprison'd, starv'd to death, you can easily tell which of these dealt most faithfully and friendly, which treacherously and cruelly: too many of the Ministers in *England* have been faulty this way, and guilty of murdering multitudes, if not millions of soules; it's one of the crying sins of the Land, that we have had such a dumb, insufficient, and consequently such a bloody soul-damning Ministry: And many amongst them having slain soules, now by putting on these warres, seek to slay bodies also.

11. There is a great necessity lyeth upon the Prophets and Ministers of Christ, to preach, and to preach home to the conscience; warn them they must, and so warn them, that they may take notice, else it's in vain, and shall be before the Lord as no warning; this they must do, and do it oft; and why? else the blood of the wicked will be required at their hand, their blood, their lives, lye at the stake for sinners soules, they have a hard task, a dangerous Calling, and therefore had need preach, and tell them of their sins, that if it be possible, they may save their soules, if not, their own; people wonder many times at some Preachers, they are so fiery,

fiery, so particular, so terrible, so long, you may cease to wonder, their lives, their souls, go for it, if they doe it not; the hazard of souls and lives will make dumb men speak; *Cræsus* son being dumb, and seeing one ready to strike and endanger the life of his father, cry'd out, *What, will you kill my father?* and if our dumb Ministers had any faith, if they did believe that sin was slaying the souls of their people, they would lift up their voyce, they would speak, *Psal.* 116. 10. *I believed, said David, therefore have I spoken;* and godly Ministers believe mens souls are in danger, that their own do lie at the stake, and therefore they have spoken, do speak, and will speak: you that have *curam animarum*, the charge of souls, look about you, if you discharge not your duty, you undo them, and undo your selves; let not feare, favour, credits, gifts, hopes, misbials you; let not difficulties, mistakes of people, or any other thing discourage you, but remember your own danger, warn sinners, else their blood will be upon you, and that is a dreadfull thing; did men well consider this, they would not be so greedy of Livings, & pawn their souls for pelf; if the death of the body were only here meant, as it is not, wee have great cause to feare silence; for if we be liable to death for the death of that which is perishable, and must die, what guilt then doth a Prophet contract for the death of a soul which might have lived for ever, if he had done his duty? *David* knew the weight of blood-guiltinesse, *Psal.* 51. 14. when he cryed out so, *Deliver me from blood-guiltinesse, &c.* that was but the blood of the body; what then is the blood of souls? it's a mountainous sinking thing; we have sins sufficient of our own, we had not need to draw the guilt of others upon us; ^a so many we kill, as we see to sin, and silently suffer to go on in their sins. *Paul* knew it, and therefore said, *Wo is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel,* 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. And there is a wo to all that have charges, that preach not unto them; it's ^b needfull for us all, but especially, for Non-refidants, dumb Ministers, those are negligent in their preaching, or impervinent, to meditate oft on these words; *his blood will I require at thy hands*, which words are *fulmina, non verba*, saith *Erasmus*: when the Bell rings for a wicked man, feare, lest there be blood to be required at thy hand. ^c *Eusebius* a Shepheard, that had the Sheep belonging to a City committed to him, through his negligence, a Wolf entred, and devoured sixty of them; upon this he was condemn'd

^a *Alienas mortes addimus, quia nos occidimus, quot ad mortem ire quotidie tepidi & tacentes videmus, Greg. in loc.*

^b The world is full of Priests, Sed tamen in messe Dei rarus valde invenitur operator. we take upon us the office, but opus officii non implemus, Gre. Hom. 17.

^c Herod. l. 9.

condemnd and lost his eyes. Not only Ministers, but Parents and Masters, their souls are engaged for their children and servants, and they must be responsible for them, if they warn them not, if they perish through their default.

12. It's the duty of people to heare their Ministers, and willingly to receive instructions, and take warning from them, especially people of their Ministers, because they watch for their souls, they work for them, and they venture for them, even their own lives and souls; it's mercy God will send any to admonish us, if we hearken to admonitions we shall live, if we do not, wee grieve the servants of God, if they be silent, our sins are not the lesse.

V E R. 19.

Observ. 1. **T**Hat men may be warn'd from their wicked wayes, and yet be never the better, they may go on still; this is too evident amongst us daily.

2. It is not fruitlesse, if wicked men return not from their evil wayes upon warning: The Prophet hath warn'd the wicked, and hath freed his own soul: and this was a great comfort unto Paul, *Act. 20. 26.* when he appeals to the people themselves, *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men;* and how doth he prove it? thus: *for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsell of God.* He left none unwarn'd of sin and danger, untaught their duty towards God and man; and therefore he had this testimony, yeelding sound comfort, *I am pure from the blood of all:* so when he had preached Christ to the *Jewes*, and they opposed, blasphemed, he shook his rayment, and said, *your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean,* *Act. 18. 5, 6.* much like that of *David*, *2 Sam. 3. I and my kingdome are guiltlesse before the Lord for ever from the blood of Abner;* *Let it rest on the head of Joab.* That which Paul calls *clean*, *David* calls *guiltlesse*, when a man is guiltlesse he is clean, he hath solid comfort; a Minister having conscionably warn'd the wicked, and nothing comes of it in regard of them, yet somewhat comes of it in regard of himself; he is a free man, a cleer man; the blood of souls shall not be charged upon him. A Minister that is faithfull, shall not need to complain of the want of success; if he save not others he shall save himself.

V E R. 20, 21.

Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die, because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be remembered, but his blood will I require at thy hand.

21. *Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin; he shall surely live, because he is warn'd: also thou hast delivered thy soul.*

IN these words is laid down the other part of the Prophets Charge; it's not only *the wicked*, but *the righteous* also fall under his care; and if he sin, and be not warn'd, that effect will be dangerous and deadly to the Prophet; he is not only to deal with the wicked, to get them into the way of God, but also with the righteous, to see that he go not out of the way, and if he do, to reduce him, guilt will lie upon a Prophet, if he do not call upon the wicked for repentance: and likewise, if he keep not the righteous in the right way, they must not be suffer to run out into errors, into loose courses, but he must inform them of the danger, bring them to a sound mind, into the right way, and confirm them in the truth, otherwise their blood will be required at his hand.

There is difficulty in these words, and they must be opened unto you: In *Pro. 10. 25. The righteous is an everlasting foundation*, and *Chap. 12. 3. The root of the righteous shall not be moved*, *Verf. 7. The house of the righteous shall stand*: *Matth. 25. 46. They goe into life eternal*; if so, how saith our Prophet here; *When a righteous man turns from his righteousness*? It seems that righteousness is not an incorruptible seed, a man may leave it, fall into sin, and die in it. I must therefore bestow some time in opening these words:

When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, &c.

You shall finde in Scripture, a double righteousness, and so suitable *Righteous men*: there is,

1. *A righteousness of faith*, *Rom. 9. 30.* and this is in *Phil. 3. 9. the righteousness of God by faith*; this is Evangelicall righteousness.

2. There

2. There is the righteousness of the Law, Rom. 2. 26 Chap. 10 5. and this is call'd a mans own righteousness, Rom. 10. 3. Phil. 3. 9. Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law. When a mans actions are suitable unto the Law, that is legal righteousness, and so his own.

According to these two, are two sorts of Righteous men :

1. The man that is righteous by faith, who hath the pardon of his sins, union with Christ, and communion with God, such an one is he Peter speaks of, 1 Pet. 4. 18. If the righteous be scarcely saved; such an one John mentions, 1 Epist. 2. 29. and Paul pointeth at such, Rom. 5. 19. and their righteousness remaineth for ever, 2 Cor. 9. 9. Of a man righteous in this sense, I conceive the words are not meant; this righteousness makes a mans person righteous, and righteous before God.

2. There is a righteous man according to the Law; Paul was such a man before his conversion: Phil. 3. 6. Touching the righteousness which is in the Law, saith he, I was blamelesse; and men righteous in this sense, are either seeming, or really seeming, Mat. 23. 28. Yee outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within yee are full of hypocrisie and iniquity; men thought them to be righteous, but God knew them so be wicked; and such Legalists think themselves righteous, Luk. 18. 9. they trusted in themselves that they were righteous, in others, and their own eyes they seemed so, but in truth were not so: Zachary and Elizabeth were righteous before God, Luk. 1. 6.

But there is an out-side actionall righteousness before men, without reality within, and from this it's no difficult thing to turn aside; and of such a righteous man we may understand this place. The Chaldee expounds it so; *Eos qui iusti videri volunt, permittam in publicum peccatum labi*; those that seem to be righteous, I will suffer to fall into open sins. And the Scholiast refers a righteous man to the Priest, who hath Doctorall dignity, and seems to love vertue but doth not; and the soundest Interpreters agree in it: Calvin calls it a righteousness which hath *externam speciem tantum, non radicem*; many have been zealous in the service and Cause of God, and gone beyond others in promoting his glory, but have had no true root within; such were those promoted lately with much intention the Prelaticall ways and Innovations, but now are turn'd

from their righteousness, and are become Parliaments-converts; their righteousness lay in opinion, not in reality, and such is this here; and the Scripture speaks frequently, after the opinions and conceits of men; *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* The *Pharisees* were conceived by this world and themselves to be righteous, when in truth they had none; and *Matth. 8. 12.* *The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into utter darkness;* they were not so really, but in opinion, and externally.

2. Be is here meant a reall righteous man, whose inside and outside is suitable to the Law, blamelesse; as *Paul* and *Zachary*; yet he that stands upon that foundation, viz. the Law, he will slide from his righteousness: witnesse *Adam*, who had a fuller righteousness then any of his sons since, and yet he turn'd away from it. The Law required two things; to depart from evil, and to do good; and he did the contrary, depart from good, and doe evil; and in this he hath too many followers, all his children have traced those steps; and men that not onely seem, but are legally righteous, may still do it, the 18th Chapter of this Prophecie is cleer for it.

3. If it should be granted that here is meant a man justified, righteous with the righteousness of faith, it followes not that he must necessarily turn from his righteousness, lose his faith, and be in an unjustified condition; *Gal. 1. 8.* *If wee, or an angel from heaven should preach any other Gospel unto you then what wee have preached, let him be accursed.* It cannot be inferred hence that an Angel will, or ever shall preach another Gospel, it's 1500. years since this was writ, and no Angels have attempted any such thing, nor ever will. Hypotheticall Propositions, according to Logicians, *Nihil ponunt in esse*, they produce no effects, but they prove the necessity of a consequent, as thus; *1 Cor. 15. 14.* *If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching, and your faith in vain;* the supposition doth not inforce that Christ is not risen, but it strongly proves, that if Christ be not risen, that preaching and believing in Christ are in vain; and so here, if a righteous man could turn from his righteousness, he should die, but he that is once righteous with the righteousness of faith, is ever righteous, because Gods decree is unchangeable, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* his love is permanent; *Job. 13. 1.* his promises are faithfull, *1 Cor. 1. 8.* *2 Cor. 1. 20.* he forgets not his

his covenant; *Pfal.* 89. 35. Christs prayers are efficacious; *Job.* 11. 41, 42. *Job.* 17. 15. because he is united to Christ, and that union is indissoluble; *1 Cor.* 12. 13. because the Spirit abides in them; *1 Job.* 2. 27. and lastly, because he is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, *1 Pet.* 1. 5.

*Quod gratia
semel fecit, per-
petuo manet,
Thom. 3. p.
q. 88.*

Committ iniquity.

The Hebrew *Afah*, or *Gnafah* *Avel*, is to do evil, and answereth to that phrase in the new Testament, *poiein hamartian*, *1 Job.* 3. 4. be that committeth sin; and this phrase of committing sin, hath more in it then *Hamartamein*, which is to sin, to misse the mark; for, *1 Job.* 2. 1. *וְאִם יִשְׁכָּח*, If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father; Christ pleads and intercedes for such a sinner, but he that committs sin is of the Devill, *1 Joh.* 3. 8. he is his son, he is of his seed, family, kingdome, acted by his counsell and spirit; it's his trade to sin as it's the Devils, and this trade he delights in and followes; a godly man hath given it over; *1 Job.* 3. 3. *Hee that hath this hope purifies himself*: and then followes; *Hee that committs sin*; and it's in opposition to him that purifies himself from sin, he is a man that minds not holinesse. Besides this, *Job.* 8. 34. *He that committs sin is the servant of sin*; where sin reigns, and it's counsels, lawes, commands are obeyed by men, there is the commission of sin; it's a ready, a willing obedience; to commit sin, is *magnopere delectari peccato*, to have a mans will and heart in it; when a mans thoughts, counsels, meditations, purposes, lie that way, and he is given to that work, *ὁ ποιῶν ἀμαρτίαν*, is a sin-maker, one that is an Artist, a workman, such the Prophet speaks of, *Jer.* 4. 22. *They are wise to do evil*; *Ezek.* 21. 31. *skilfull to destroy*; some are bunglers in that work, others take pleasure in it, and set it off better. That in *Rom.* 13. 14. *Make no provisions for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*; men love to provide for their families, their wives and little ones, and when they do so, they make provision, and so men love to provide for the flesh & lusts of it, and then they make sin, or commit sin. There be three expressions in Scripture about sin, which give us light in this point.

*ὁ ποιῶν τὴν
ἀμαρτίαν.*

*Rollock in
John.*

1. *Nomos hamartias*, the law of sin, *Rom.* 7. 23.
2. *Hodos*, the way of sin, *Matth.* 7. 13.
3. *Apotelesma*, the perfection of sin, *Jam.* 1. 15.

When

When a man subjects to the law of sin, chooses and walks in the way of sin, and brings sin to a perfection, then doth he commit sin.

And I lay a stumbling block before him.

The Hebrew is, *and I give a stumbling block before his face*; *Misol* comes of *Cachal*, to dash against, to offend, to fall; and a stumbling block is that a man dasheth his foot against, is offended at, and falls by; the same with *scandalum*, the bridge in a trap, which when Vermin, or wilde beasts touch, they are taken; so that to lay a stumbling block in a mans way, is to trap him, destroy him. This phrase of Gods laying a *stumbling block before him*, seems very harsh; therefore some Fathers think the word *stumbling block* is not here put in an ill sense, as tending to his destruction, *that turns from his righteousness*, but that it proceeds from favour, not hatred. When a just man goeth out from God, God will crosse him in his sinfull way, not let him thrive in it, but cast in something contrary to his expectation and intention, whereby he may come to see his error, and be reduced, according to that in *Hos. 2. 6, 7. Theod.* thinks God will set hell before him, and therefore he renders it *Barathrum*, I will lay hell before him; as if God would present the terrours of hell, and state of the damned to him, to make him consider and return to his former righteousness. But this sense of the Fathers coheres not with what follows, *he shall die*; this stumbling block is in order unto his death: it was the watchmans part to propound heaven, hell, all arguments possible to do him good, else he should die. Some other Expositors would have it to be meant of punishment, that God would punish such a sinner by some act of his, make him smart, repent, and so to live; therefore the *Septuag.* render it *Basanon* torment, God would afflict his body or conscience; and if it be taken in this sense, then you must carry it further; God would punish him, not in a saving, but a destroying way; and therefore this stumbling block comes not from love, but revenging Justice. I conceive Gods laying a stumbling block, is to be taken for the punishment of sin past, and an occasion of sin future; the righteous man having turn'd from his righteousness, God might lay aside that peculiar care and providence which he exercised formerly towards that man, he may take

take away those means and helps should preserve from stumbling, let him go on in just judgement for his deserting him, and not recall him, but turn all things into snares and stumblings unto him, whereby corruptions are ripened, and destruction is hastened; *Psal. 69. 22. Let their table become a snare before them, and that should be for their welfare, let it become a trap*; when God in his Justice once orders it so, that mens tables (that is, all their comforts) do turn to their ruine, then he laies stumbling blocks before them. Neither is God the author of sin, but the avenger of it, by denying assistance, propounding objects, and exciting affections; God may be said to lay stumbling blocks, but he never infuses any corruption; and so that in *James, God tempts no man*, Chap. 1. 13. is to be understood: *Gregory saith, this laying a stumbling block, Est nequaquam ad peccandum premere, sed nosse a peccato liberare*, he is not the cause of any mans sin, the occasion he may be without sin. A man may lay money to try his servant; God takes away estates from men, gives peace to the wicked; true, he layes before them outward occasions, *2 Sam. 16. 21, 22. he gives Satan leave to tempt and seduce them*; *2 King. 22. 22. when they are out of his way, he carries them forward in their own evill way*; *Psal. 105. 35. and this he doth in justice, punishing one sin with the occasion or commillion of another*; hence he is said to *adde iniquitie to their iniquity*, *Psal. 69. 27. to send them strong delusions*, or, as the words are, *the efficacy or activity of error*, *2 Thes. 2. 11. to give up to uncleannesse, to vile afflictions, to a reprobate sense*, *Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. God finds sin in man, and may draw it out without sin*: there is *juvitas in Rosa, fætor in cadavere*, the Sun by his beams drawes forth the one and the other, and without fault.

His righteousness shall not be remembered.

Men may remember it, but God will not, he will have no regard to what is done to reward it; his righteousness shall not be set against his iniquities to keep off punishments; his righteousness shall be as filthy rags, *I/a. 64. 6. in the eyes of God. When God pardons the sins of his people, he blots them out, and remembers them no more*, *I/a. 43. 25. So when God deals with a man degenerates, he blots out his righteousness, and remembreth it no more, it is as if it had never been*; it neither profits him unto life, nor frees him

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him from death; *Ezek.* 18. 23. When a wicked man turns away from his sins, *they shall not be mentioned unto him*; that is, they shall no way hurt him, he shall not heare of them, nor see them any more; and the righteous man that leaves his righteousness, shall neither heare nor see it any more. *Aquinas* hath a question, *Utrum opera virtutum in charitate facta possint mortificari*: and he affirms it from that in *Ezek.* 18. 24. *All his righteousness which he hath done, shall not be mentioned.*

Observ. 1. It concerns every man to look narrowly to his righteousness; some righteousness or other, every man looks at, fixes his heart upon; and there be deceivable righteousnesses: if our righteousness be legall, a duty righteousness, and not Evangelicall, a righteousness of faith, it will deceive us; *Mat.* 5. 20. *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: let that righteousness be what it will, a man is in an ill case that cannot enter into heaven with it; yet the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were exact keepers of the Law, but the righteousness of the Law and of duties will never send or help a man into heaven; *Paul* laboured to win Christ, to be found in him, not having his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. *Paul* durst not stick to a legall and duty righteousness, he knew it was too short to satisfie divine justice, to cover mans nakedness, or comfort his conscience; it was a higher, a better righteousness he minded, even the righteousness of Christ, and that's the righteousness God will accept, and he that's righteous with that righteousness, shall not fall away, but shall enter into heaven; *2 Pet.* 1. 10, 11. *Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; that is, their calling to Christ, and election in him; and what follows? if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom.*

2. No man should boast of, or confide in his own righteousness: *Luk.* 18. 9. there was some trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others; but this neither pleased God, nor profited them, as the Parable insuing shewes; if men have excellencies, they should be humble, and fearing, not boasting and confident, especially when their excellencies are in the number of moveables, and changeables; *1 Cor.* 1. 29, 30. *Christ is made*

unto us wisdom and righteousness, that no flesh should glory in it self, but in the Lord; and so, that no flesh should have confidence in it self, but in the Lord; *Phil. 3. 3. We rejoice in Christ, saith Paul, and have no confidence in the flesh; what ever we have or do, let us not repose upon it; we are apt to do it; but there are Apostolicall rules to help us: Gal. 6. 3. If a man think himself any thing, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself; we are nothing, and it's nothing we do, and shall we glory in nothing, or confide in nothing? Christ is something, and God is something, in them we may, we must glory and confide; the more we do it, the better, we cannot sin in going too far that way. Another rule is, *Phil. 2. 3. Let each esteem others better than themselves; their righteousness may be a lasting righteousness, when thine is a perishing one. Another rule is, Rom. 11. 20. Be not high minded, but feare; Let mens righteousness be Legall or Evangelicall, they should not swell, but feare, lest they fall; and besides, they should watch, pray, and persevere in prayer; remembering what our blessed Saviour hath said, He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved, Matthe. 24. 13. Let none be secure, but serve the Lord with feare, Psal. 2. 11.**

3. Apostasie from God and his wayes is a dreadfull condition: when men fall from their righteousness, great mischief is done, they stain the Society they were of, they blast the Church, they make their friends mourne, and enemies laugh; they wrong God much, yea, more then Infidels & Hereticks; *Plura vincula conjunctionis violantur, & Deit ipse tacite accusatur quasi iniquus*, which causeth God to complain, *O my people, what have I done unto thee? wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me; you are withdrawn, fallen to Idolatrous passages; I brought you out of Egypt, and I sent before you Moses and Aaron, I delivered you from Balak, &c. many times are upon you to keep close to me, and to cause you to honour me, but you have forgotten all my kindnesses, are gone away, and do slight me, as if Idol gods and wayes were better then Jehovah; and his wayes, this made God to say, Heb. 10. 38. If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him; and what an ill condition is that man in, in whom God hath no pleasure?*

There be four great evils in the words of our Prophet:

First, *he will commit iniquity*; when a man turns from righteousness he turns to sin, embraces it, serves it, walks in the wayes of

it, and fulfils the ends of it, and this is a sad condition; for such a man is a worker of iniquity, and so hated of God, *Pfal. 5. 5. Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity*; it's more then *having no pleasure*, and notes God is against them, and will pursue them as enemies.

Secondly, *God will lay a stumbling block before him*; one thing or other, at which he shall fall; God denies him assistance, gives Satan leave to tempe and seduce, propounds objects to draw out his corruptions to the full; *Demas* forsook *Paul* and the truth, and loved the present world, there was an object sufficient to draw out his covetous disposition; sometimes the afflictions of the godly is a stumbling block unto the wicked, sometimes the prosperity of the wicked is a stumbling unto them, &c. It's a dreadfull thing when God shall make any thing a stumbling unto a man, but more dreadfull when he makes every thing so.

Thirdly, *He shall die in that condition*; *Julian* apostatized, and by the stroke of God he died in his apostasie; and what heavier judgement, then to die in a mans sinfull condition? therefore *Christ* told the *Pharisees*, they should die in their sins, *Job. 8. 21.* they would not receive him, believe in him, therefore they should die in their unbelieve, and no place is left unto them for repentance.

Fourthly, *His righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered*; If a man die, yet if his righteousness might follow him and help him, it were some comfort; but that shall not be thought upon, he loseth all he hath done and suffered: Suppose he have done much for the Church, for poore Ministers, prisoners, and other Christians, for Truth it self, and for the glory of God; no good shall come of it unto him now: All *Adam's* righteousness would not advantage him, what ever he had don before, when he comes to eat of the forbidden fruit, he must surely die, *Gen. 2. 17.* his former righteousness is forgotten; *Jam. 2. 10. Who soever shall keep the whole Law, and offend in one point, is guilty of all:* Antecedent righteousness will not make up the present breach, nor prevent future wrath: *Gal. 3. 4.* When the *Galatians* began to fall off, *Paul* intimates to them, that all their sufferings would be lost; have you suffered so many things in vain? When men in war forsake their colours, and run to the other side, all the good services they have done are forgotten, and they are accounted traitors to their

their Countrey and Cause; and so it is when men run from God and his Truth, to the worlds and Satans service, *Inanis est penitentia quam sequens culpa coinquinat*. But this is not all, that his righteousness shall not be remembered for him, but it will be remembered against him; 2 *Pes.* 2. 21. *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then after they have known it, to turn from it*; and why better? because they now sin against righteousness, and that way they have affected and professed, and their righteousness will be a witness against them. Let us all take heed, lest there be an evil heart in any of us, to depart from the living God, *Heb.* 3. 12.

Lumb. 1. 4.
d. 14.

4. Mans ruine is from himself; he departs from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and God lays a stumbling block; this in justice he doth, because man hath sinned; but who causes him to fall? not God, that is mans own act, he looks not to his way, it's his own lust that draws him aside, inticeth him, *Jam.* 1. 14. the cause is from within, only the occasion is from without; riches, honour, friends, peace, credit, parts, beauty, truths, Christ, are the good and great blessings of God, and God in his wise disposition of things, may lay these as occasion of stumbling before us; but if we do stumble, that is mans, not Gods fault; *Hos.* 13. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help*; destruction is mans, salvation is the Lords. Man fell by his own free will, but if ever he be raised, it's by Gods free grace, and if God will not have mercy, he will turn their iniquity upon them: *Psal.* 94. 23. *He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness*; yea *Pro.* 1. 32. it's said, *The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*.

5. Gods proceedings with the wicked and godly are divers; here he speaks of laying a stumbling block before the wicked man; and in *Jerem.* 6. 21. *Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, the father and the sonne together shall fall upon them: the neighbour and his friends shall perish*; yea, *Isa.* 8. 14. *God himselfe will be a stone of stumbling, a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin, and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*: and *Jerem.* 46. 6. *They shall stumble and fall*; but it's otherwise with the godly, touching them he saith, *Take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people*, *Isa.* 57. 14. he will remove what offends and indangers

them: and Isa. 63. 13. *Left they should stumble he leads them*: and Prov. 4. 12. *when they turn they shall not stumble*; and Psal. 119. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them*. God is carefull of the godly, that they be not offended, if they should be so offended, as to stumble, and fall at any time; Psal. 37. 24. *He shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*, and keepeth them that they dash not their feet against the stones: if God do lay stumbling blocks at any time before him, it is in the wayes of sin, as Hag. 2. *I will hedge up thy way*; but for the wicked, he lays stumbling blocks in the way of mercies; they stumble at the Word, 1 Pet. 2. 8. *it's the savour of death to them*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. *they stumble at the Lords Supper*, they eat and drink damnation there, 1 Cor. 11. 39. *they stumble at Christ himself*, 1 Cor. 1. 23.

6. An unfaithfull Minister is perfidious to God and man; *Because thou givest him not warning, he shall die in his sin, and his blood will I require at thy hands*. God hath put honour upon the Minister, set him in a great place, made him a watchman, trusted him with souls, and he now through sloth, feare, inconsideratenesse, intanglements in the world, neglects to warn the sinner; hereby souls are lost, Satan robs God of them, is diligent to get and keep them, this will be treachery and sacriledge too at last, and fall heavy upon him is guilty: if a band of men be slain through the Captains fault, or taken through falshood, all cry out of it; and when souls perish through the fault and falshood of the Prophet, it's dreadful: Zeph. 3. 4. *Her Prophets are light and treacherous persons*; the word *treacherous* in Hebrew, is *viri pravaricationum, qui debitam Deo & populo fidem pariter violaverint*, such as falsifie their faith to God and man; and it's the highest treachery that can be, to be false to God, and to rob him of the souls of men.

7. That if a Minister may perish for not warning of sinners, much more for encouraging them, by corrupt doctrine, and by a lewd life; if death be in an omission, much more in positive evils; corrupt doctrine, and a corrupt life, are strong traces to draw men to perdition, 2 Pet. 2. 1. *he speaks of false teachers*, that bring in damnable heresies, and withall, that bring upon themselves swift destruction, but their damnable heresies and opinions prevail with the people, they follow their pernicious wayes, and

Mont. in loc.

and meet with their destructive ends; *Isaie 9. 26. The leaders of this people cause them to erre; and they that are led of them are destroyed.*

V E R. 21.

Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, &c.

THe words need little opening; *He shall surely live*, in living he shall live; he shall have his life for a prey in time of danger, or he shall live comfortably that persists in this righteousness, he shall be secure from feare of death.

Obsev. 1. A Minister or Prophets care must extend to all sorts of people; before he had said, *the wicked must be warn'd*, here he saith; *the righteous also must be warn'd*, good and bad fall under admonition and circumspection of the Prophets, both are committed to their charge, and they must warn them, give accounts of them, and if they fail of their duty, die for it; the best and worst they must tell of their sins.

2. The Ministry of the Word is very needfull; wicked, righteous must be warn'd that they may not sin, retaine when they have sinn'd, escape death and be saved: the warnings of the Prophets are *salutaria remedia adversus montem animarum*; not onely the ministry of the Word in generall, but admonitions and reproofes are meanes through God to prevent the death of souls; *Pro. 15. 31. it's call'd the reproof of life*; there is life in reproofes, as death in sin; *increpationes sunt saluantes, & vivificatrices*, they teach the way to live, and lead to eternall life; hence you have such expressions, as that *he hates reproof is brutish*, *Prov. 12. 1.* he is void of understanding, a sensuall brutish creature; he regardeth it, shall be honoured, *Pro. 13. 18.* honoured with comfort, safety, life. *Noah* was warn'd of God, and made an Ark to the salvation of himself and his house; *Heb. 11. 7.* And when sinners take warning, it's life, salvation to them; *Ezek. 33. 5.* he takes warning, delivers his soul; how needfull then is warning? how profitable, if souls be saved by it? *2 Tim. 3. 16. All Scripture is given by inspiration,*

Prov. 15. 10.

piration, and is profitable for instruction, for reproof, &c. It is so profitable that the salvation of souls depends upon it. When *David* was reprov'd by *Nathan* of his sinne, it reduced him from the error of his way, and was salvation to him. Let us blesse God for his Word, and reproofes tendred to us out of it, and subject unto them as tending to our present and eternall good. Bee not offended with the reprovers, but affected with the reproofs.

V E R. 22.

And the hand of the Lord was there upon me, and he said unto me, Arise, goe forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee.

23. *Then I arose, and went forth into the plain, and behold the glory of the Lord stood there, at the glory which I saw by the river Chabar, and I fell on my face.*

24. *Then the Spirit entred into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Goe shew thy selfe within thine house.*

IN these and the following verses to the end, you have directions for the Prophet, and events that fell out.

The hand of the Lord coming upon him, he is directed to goe to the plaine, where the Lord Christ promised to speak with him; and he going thither, the first event was, he saw the glory of the Lord standing there, vers. 23.

2. He is amazed and falls down at it, which is implied in the 24. verse.

3. He hath the Spirit entring into him, and is strengthened by it, set upon his feet, which is expressed in that 24. vers.

Then here is a further direction, that he should go and shew up himselfe, vers. 24. And here his silence is declared,

1. By this inclusion of himselfe in his house.

2. By the bands imposed upon him, vers. 25. *They shall put bands upon thee.*

3. By the impediments Christ himselfe inferres, vers. 26. *I will make thee by tongue to cleave to the roofof thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb*

Lastly, the time of his prophecyings mentioned, vers. 27. which is, when Christ should speak unto him.

I come

I come to open the words:

The hand of the Lord was there upon me.

In the 14th verse of this Chapter, and in the third verse of the first Chapter, you have had these words opened already. This *hand of the Lord*, was the *Spirit of the Lord*, which acted the Prophet, and shewed him and others, that he was not moved in an humane way, or by inconsiderate motions, but divinely; the power and efficacy of the *Spirit*.

There.

That is, at *Tel-abib*, in the 15th verse; he came thither, and Gate down there seven dayes. And being in his habitation, sad, and backward unto the work he was call'd unto, the *Word* of the Lord came to him, vers. 16. and the *Hand* of the Lord was *there* upon him. He thought, being shut up in his house, that the businesse would fall, and that he should be excused from propheticall service; but he was mistaken, Gods *Hand* finds him out, and he is bidden to go forth into the plain, not to stay any longer within his doores, but to go into the plain, or valley; so the word in Hebrew signifies, being from a word which is to cut, divide, breake. This plain or valley, was divided from the mountains, and a solitary place, free from company and disturbances, delightfull, fit to refresh and quiet the spirits of men.

Observ. 1. The *Spirit* is the great agent in divine things; it's the hand of the Lord that doth all; it beautifies with gifts and graces, calls to office, directs whither to go, what to do; it assists and inables to all divine operations. Christ had the chiefest work to do that concern'd the Church, and the hand of the Lord was upon him: *Isa.* 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon mee*; and *Isa.* 11. 2. It's a *Spirit* of might, and inabled him to do mighty things, *Luk.* 24. 19. And so Stephen, *Acts* 6. 10. *They were not able to resist the Spirit by which he spake*; it's the *Spirit* doth the great things in Religion, sanctification and mortification are the works of this hand of the *Spirit* of God, *1 Cor.* 6. 11. *Alts* 13. 2. *Separate mee Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto, &c.*

2. The servants of Christ have daily need of new influences of the *Spirit* to encourage them so, & strengthen them in their work:

Ezekiel

בקה
בקע

Ezekiel was full of feares, had many discouragements, sat in a doubtfull condition what to doe, and the hand of the Lord was upon him; he had formerly felt diuine vertue, seen Christ, and heard him: yet all this doth not suffice, the hand must worke again and help him, else nothing will be done. The Apostles had been much with Christ, seen his miracles, heard his doctrine, and yet they must stay at *Jerusalem* till the Spirit fall upon them, *Acts* 1. 4. *Paul* saith of himselfe and others, *Wee are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing of our selues, but our sufficiency is of God*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. That is, all our strength and help lies in him, we daily finde a want in our selves, and God as it pleases him, lets out from his sufficiency unto us, now a little, and then a little, and we are ever receiuing from him, and enabled by his grace and Spirit, to doe what is done; in the 1. *Phil.* 19. Is mentioned the supply of the Spirit, it's the administration, subministration, under-supplying, underpropping of the Spirit; all which words note the Saints infirmities, and need of the Spirit. Those things befell *Paul*, would not turne to his good, without the *Philippians* prayets, and further supply of the Spirit: as a weak house must be underpropped, a sickly man haue daily help, an Army constant supply; so must the seruants of God be under-propped, helped, supplied by the Spirit: Therefore we should daily pray, as it is in *Psal.* 68. 28. *Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us, and that which thou hast wrought in us.*

3. No place can keep off the hand of God from coming upon us: *There at Tekiab*, shut up in his house, diuine vertue sealed upon him, he thought now to heare no more of prophesying, and doing publick service of that nature to the *Jewes*, but the Spirit of God found him out, that cannot be excluded from any place, or limited to any time: It's like the winde that blowes where and when it listeth: When the Apostles were shut up in a roome, *Acts* 2. 2, 3. there was a rushing mighty winde, that filled all the house, and the Spirit with it, that filled all them. So when *Cornelius* and his company heard *Peter* preach in a private room, the holy Ghost fell on them all, *Acts* 10. 4. 4. As no place can include the Spirit of God, so can none exclude it. There were Saints in *Nero's* Court, and this hand of God had been working there; it's not a dungeon, any prison can keep out the Spirit of God from coming to, and

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and comforting of his servants: *Glover* found the truth of it when he said, *O Azzin*, he is come!

4. The more separate from the world, the more fit for communion with God: *Ezekiel* must go into the plain, and there the Lord would talk with him, he could have conversed with him at *Telabib*, among the people in his own habitation; but the Lord declines that, intimating, that while wee are conversant with worldly and wicked men, we are incapable of divine mysteries; but when we are remote from them, solitary and sedate, we are fitter to heare God speak: When the Church was allured into the Wilderness, *Hos. 2. 14.* then God would speak, and thus comfortably unto her. It was by the river *Chebar* he had his former vision, when he was absent from popular noyse, domestick troubles, his minde serene and contemplative, then the Lord opened himselfe unto him. Christ oft left the multitude, and when he was gotten aside into the mount, then was his transfiguration, and the voyce, *This is my beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleased, heare him*, *Matth. 17.*

VERS. 23. *Then I arose, and went into the plain, &c.*

IF ought have need of opening in this verse, it is the glory of the Lord, and there is no cloud upon this. The verse expounds it selfe, it is the glory he saw before by the river *Chebar*; that glorious vision he had there, is represented again here unto the Prophet. The Vision was not like the Temple, fixed to a place; but it was moveable, it was first presented to him at *Chebar*, and now again in this plain.

The reasons of this second apparition of the glory of God, are:

First, to possesse the heart of the Prophet with greater reverence of divine Majesty, he was unwilling to the service called to by God, sought excuses, thought to decline it, which argued neglect of divine Majesty to strike out such distempers, and to strike in a deeper impression of feare and respect to God. This glorious vision is set before his eyes, and frames him to a fitnessse for that employment; he might now see Christ sitting as Judge, compassed about with glory, having Angels ready to execute his pleasure, power in and over all parts of the world; and if he should refuse

the imployment appointed, hee ran a manifest hazard of his life.

Secondly, to confirme the truth of the Propheſie, and him in it.

Thirdly, to prepare the Church in all ages to an high eſteeme of this Propheſie, that was ushered into the world with ſuch glorious viſions.

Obſerv. 1. Divine vertue makes men obedientiall unto the command of God: The hand of the Lord was upon him, he bids him goe forth; and preſently he aroſe and went forth into the plaine. If things enjoyned ſuit not with our wills, opinions and humours, we deny them, excuſe and take off our ſelves from the doing of them, or deſerre them; but let God enjoyn what he will, be it harſh to ſiſh and bloud, contrary to our wills, carnall reaſon, &c. if divine vertue once come upon us, and the Spirit move in us, wee will doe it; God bid *Abraham* take his ſonne, his onely ſonne *Iſaac* whom he loved, goe and ſacrifice him upon a mountaine in the land of *Moriab*, *Gen. 22.* Fleſh and bloud had much to obje& here; but becauſe he was acted by divine vertue, therefore he obeyed preſently, he roſe early, took his ſonne, went to the place, ſtretched out his hand to ſlay him, and to make him a Sacrifice; we ſtick oft at ſmall things when nature only workes, not at any thing when the Spirit of God works in us.

2. They are obedient to God ſimply upon his command, meet with mercies unexpected: *Ezekiel* goes forth upon command, not knowing what was to come, what was to be done, and he meets with an extraordinary mercy, he ſaw the glory of the Lord, a raviſhing, a ſatisfying mercy. *Abraham* obting the command of God, heares the voyce of an Angel twice, and meets with a multitude of bleſſings, *Gen. 22. 17.* *In bleſſing I will bleſſe thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy ſeed as the ſtarres of beaven, and as the ſand of the ſea ſhore, & thy ſeed ſhall poſſeſſe the gate of his enemies, and in thy ſeed ſhall all the Nations of the earth be bleſſed, becauſe thou haſt obeyed my voyce.* So *Jacob* returned from *Laban* to his fathers houſe upon divine command, and he meets with Angels, *Gen. 32. 1.* hee met with God, and like a Prince prevailed with him for a bleſſing, verſ. 28. No man ever loſt by his obedience unto God; though we ſee no reaſon for things, yet if we have the will of God that's reaſon enough

enough; let us be tractable and forward to doe the will of God, and wee shall not lose our labour, wee may meet with mercies unexpected, as some by coming to the Ordinances have done.

3. See the goodnesse of the Lord in two things:

First, in that he will manifest his glory to the view of mortall sinfull creatures; his glory is precious, a hidden thing, and not obvious to creatures; yet here, as before, he is pleased in a Vision to present it to the sight of *Ezekiel*: it was to the Ambassador of a Prince that *Hezekiah* shew'd the house of his precious things, Isa. 39.2. and it was a great favour to let them see such rarities; it was a greater favour from God to let *Ezekiel* see this rarity of rarities, his Glory.

Secondly, that God should ad over the same thing again, present the same Vision in living creatures, wheels, eyes, firmament, a throne, and one sitting upon it, and give a sight of his glory the second time; this sets out Gods goodnesse abundantly; men are unwilling to do the same thing twice, when as they may doe it better the second time then the first, and advantage themselves by it, but God hath no advantage, doth it perfectly at first; yet simply for mans good, he condescends to do the same thing again. So *Ezekiel* may be brought to a fitnessse for divine dispensations, encouraged too, and in his work he shall have a sight of glory, and a glorious Vision presented to him the second time by Gods own hand; we think repetitions of things in vain, a Sermon twice over is stale, unwelcome, oft neither Minister nor people find any favour in it, and so other things; but God repeats the Vision without prejudice to himself, or damage to the Prophet.

4. Sin makes us uncaptious of happinesse; it's mans happinesse to see the glorious God, and have communion with him. While *Adam* stood, he could behold God, converse with him in his glorious appearances unto him, but after his fall, he fled from his presence, was disabled, and incaptious of the sight of him and his glory; so here, *Ezekiel* cannot abide the sight of this glorious Vision, but falls down upon his face, and hides himself from his own happinesse: till sin be purged out of us, it will be so; therefore God hath appointed purging ordinances, that we being purified, might at last see him, and have fruition of him. Two things especially are required to the sight of glory, Holinesse and

Strength, to both which sin is opposite, it defiles, it infeebles, so that we dare not, we cannot behold glory; see what mischief sin hath done us.

5. Apprehensions and sight of glory doe much humble gracious hearts: When *Ezekiel* saw the glory of the Lord, he fell upon his face: the glory of a creature raises a carnall heart, but the glory of the Creator humbles a gracious heart. *Job. 1. 14. We bebold his glory as the onely begotten of the Father; and this made John the greatest Prophet that ever was borne of a woman, to be so low in his own eyes, that he professed himselfe unworthy to loose the laces of his shooe, ver. 27. There be some things in the sight of divine glory, that works strongly to humble the soule.*

First, It is of that lustre and excellency, as that it darkens all the glory of the world, and makes it seeme no more then the lustre of a Glow-worme to the Sunne.

Secondly, It sets out the shamefulnesse and blacknesse of sinne.

Thirdly, The insufficiency of all humane motions and duties to attaine unto it.

Fourthly, Shews the infinite distance between God and the creature.

All which are humbling things, and concurring doe humble more thoroughly, *Ezekiel* was not onely amazed, doth not onely fall downe, but falls upon his face, and that after a second sight of the same glory: so that it's in the nature of glory to humble; other things may humble a little, but glory most of all: that comes by the eare doth something, but that is seen by the eye affects most. *Isaiab* had heard the Seraphims crying, *Holy, holy, holy, the earth is full of his glory*; but this struck not so deeply into his heart, as the sight of glory; when he saw the King, the Lord of Hosts in his glory, then he cryed out, *woe is me, I am undone*; his holinesse was nothing, his prophetickall office was nothing, all was nothing to him, he was an undone man, he saw so much sinne in himselfe; *I am a man of uncleane lips, &c.*

V E R. 24.

Then the Spirit entred into mee, &c.

BEing in a dejected condition the Spirit entred. It was said before, *the hand of the Lord came upon him*, which was the Spirit; and here, *the Spirit entred into mee*. What difference is there between these two phrases? you may observe this difference, The hand of the Lord upon the Prophet, notes the efficacy and work of the Spirit in generall, the common gifts and graces of it, which may fit a man for publick employment. The entring of the Spirit notes, not onely those, but the sanctifying of a man, so that he shall employ his gifts and graces to the glory of God, and eternall good of his own soul. Of the Spirits entring and setting the Prophet upon his feet I spake in the 2 Chap. ver. 2. It was not the ayre, his own spirit returning, nor an Angel, but the Holy Spirit of God. This entrance of the Spirit notes, not motion from place to place, for the Spirit is infinite and fills heaven and earth, but it notes operation, manifestation, impletion; when the Spirit doth work efficaciously, manifest it self, (for there may be invisible operations) fill the heart of any with divine vertue, when it doth any one of these, or all these, it's said to be sent, to come, to enter; it comforted the Prophet, being amazed, sunk in apprehension of his own unworthinesse, and manifested its operation by setting him upon his feet, giving new strength to goe and prophesie when time should serve.

God shut thy selfe within thy house.

These words are not ironically spoken, or by way of Sarcasme, because he had formerly shut up himselfe, but they are a command from God to the Prophet; it's true, by reason of the rebellious disposition of the people, the weightinesse of the calling he was to be in, and the infirmities of the flesh, he had withdrawne from his dutie, and God beares with him, bids him withdraw from the publick view; Jerome thinks this shutting up was a type of the besieging of the Citie, that as he should be shut up in his house, so the Jewes at *Jerusalem*. Others thinke more probably, that it was to receive instructions from God, and to heare from him before he should speak ought to the people, therefore some observe that our Prophet

Prophet heard and saw much, and spake not till the end of the 11th Chap. 23. *verf.* where he saith, *Then I spake unto them of the captivity, &c.* This shutting up made way for the credit and authority of the Prophet and his Prophecie.

Observ. 1. The Spirit affects and visits a humble soule: When the Prophet was humbled with the sense of his own unworthinesse, trembled at the sight of glory and majesty, was destitute of strength; then it pleased the Spirit of God to enter: humiliations upon sight of glory and greatnesse are deepest, and the Spirit loves to visit them speedily; God doth not long leave humble soules without operations and manifestations of his Spirit. *Jam. 4. 6.* *He resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble,* he sends the Spirit into their hearts to comfort and strengthen them, because they are low, vile in their own eyes; but destruction is for the proud, God is in battaile array against them; the Spirit appeared like a dove, and is a dove of the valleys, not of the mountains; while Paul was a mountaine in his own eyes, the Spirit never came neere him, but when he was humbled with the sight of glory, *Act. 9.* even the glory of Christ, and became a valley, then quickly the spirituall dove took her flight to him, for *ver. 17.* saith Ananias, Brother Saul, the Lord hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost; the Lord Jesus would not let him want his Spirit to revive him, that was so effectually humbled at the sight of his glory.

2. The godly before Christ, had the same Spirit, grace, and comforts that wee have since Christ. Ezekiel had the Spirit enter into him; What Spirit? Even the Spirit of God and Christ, the third Person in the sacred Trinitie; neither doth that in *John* crosse this truth, *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified,* Chap. 7. 39. Not given at all is not the meaning, but was not given so plentifully, to visibly, till Christ was glorified. You know that Kings when they enter their Kingdomes first, or ride in triumph after great Victories, then they scatter gold and silver plentifully, and give the greatest honors and gifts unto men: So Christ reserved the pouring out of his Spirit in such plenty and invisible signes, till his glorifying; therefore *Austine* saith, *The Prophets had not another Spirit who foretold Christ to come;* but this is meant of that manner of giving which appeared not at all before.

They

They under the Law had not the Spirit given in that way and so largely, but they had the same Spirit, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21. and *Luke* 1. 41. 67.

3. The Spirit of Christ which the godly receive, is not a Spirit of bondage, but of comfort, of grace and freedom; this Spirit did not straiten the Prophet but enlarge him, he was imprison'd with his own feares, beate downe under sense of his own worthlesnesse; but this Spirit of Christ did set him at libertie, and lift him up againe, and works graciously in him; this Spirit is oft call'd the *Comforter*, and that emphatically, because no man, no Angel, no Ordinance doe or can comfort like the Spirit, it helps against feares, finnes, guilt, temptations, straitnesse of heart; this made the Apostle say, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. It knocks off bolts, locks, shackles; it makes way for his own graces to act, and act with liveliness, and if there be strong holds within, strong lusts that oppose, it's a Spirit of power, and will carry all before it, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. *God hath not given us the Spirit of feare, but of power*, such power as will conquer all the rebellions of a mans will, bring all into order, captivate every thought unto Christ, and make a man able to doe the whole will of God, an *Ezekiel* to prophesie to a rebellious people, and to venture his life amongst them.

4. Those Christ sends unto the Church, he gives his Spirit unto: *Ezekiel* hath the Spirit enters into him before he enters upon his office: men voyd of the Spirit are not meet to be Church-officers; all things in the Church come under spirituall consideration, the people are to be professors of holinesse, ordinances are holy, and what should unholy officers doe there? if they have not the Spirit of Christ, they are none of his, and what should they doe in the Church of Christ? he will aske them one day; Friends how came you in hither? I sent you not.

5. The Spirit performes what Christ promiseth: In the 22th verse, Christ bids the Prophet goe forth into the plaine, and tells him he will there talke with him, but being come thither, the Spirit entred into him, and spake with him. Christ and the Spirit are one in Essence, one in will, and one in operation, so that the Prophet was not deceived, but it was the same as if Christ had spoken to him, *I will be with you to the end of the world*, saith Christ; his Spirit

Spirit was with them, and so in that it was made good that *he was with them*; the Spirit makes good what ever the Lord Jesus hath promised, when it comes, and it cannot be otherwise; for these three, *Father, Word, and Holy Ghost* are one, and agree in one, 1 *Joh. 5. 7.*

6. There is a language of the Spirit within a man: *The Spirit entred into mee, and spake with mee*; How it speaks is hard to make out unto you. We have heard that the Devill hath spoken in parties bewitched and possessed, and you have text of Scripture for it, *Act. 19. 13, 14, 15. When the sonnes of Serus adjured the evill spirit in the Name of Jesus, the evill spirit answered, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are yee?* Thus did the Devill expresse himselfe in the possessed; and surely the Spirit of God can speak vocally in those where it dwells, but that is not the ordinary language of the Spirit. A man speaks to another, *Quando conceptum mentis alteri manifestat*, and as the Schools say of Angels, they speak *manifestando suum volutum*, so we may say, the Spirit speaks unto us by manifestation of its minde unto us. *Joh. 16. 13. What the Spirit shall bear, that shall he speake, and he will shew you things to come*: and ver. 14. *he shall receive of mine, and will shew it unto you.*

Halenf.

7. The proceedings of God with his own servants are various and darksome; the Prophet was bid to preach oft before in the 22. verse, he is called forth into the plaine, and when he is there the Lord bids him goe and *shut himselfe up in his house*, as it is in this 24. verse. Now he will have him prophesie, and presently he suspends him from his office and libertie, neither is there any change in God, but he by these various dispensations fulfills his eternall counsell.

8. God considers the weaknesse of his servants, beares with, and provides well against them: *Ezekiel* was timorous, the House of *Israel* rebellious, and like enough to offer violence to the Prophet, if he should have presently propounded the dreadfull judgments of God that were at hand against *Jerusalem*, and therefore he takes care of him, and commands him to shut up himselfe, that so he might be safe, and not at first be discouraged at the wickednesse of the people, or weightinesse of his worke; God is full of bowells and tenders his, when put upon difficult imployments.

V E R. 25.

But thou O Son of man, behold they shall put bands upon thee, and shall binde thee with them, and thou shalt not go out amongst them.

THis verse speaks of the bands impos'd upon the Prophet, and what these were, we must inquire. The word is *Gnavothim*, which the Syriack renders *catene*, chains, the Vulgar *vincula*, bands, *Montanus*, *funis* ropes, and not any ropes, but *funis consortii adeo-que densi*, thick twisted ropes, as the originall signifies. Now these ropes or bands be taken literally by some, and metaphorically by others.

סבותים

Literally thus: They seeing the Prophet sad seven dayes, and now astonish'd at what he had seene and heard, and observing some strange looks and carriages from him, they thought he was or would be besides himselfe, and therefore they bound him; it was a conceit among Jewes and Gentiles, that Prophets were a kinde of mad-men. *Hos. 9. 7. The spirituall man*, or as the Hebrew is, *the man of the Spirit is mad*; they thought him out of his wits; our Prophet had received the Spirit of Christ, and that wrought in him, and the people might be apt enough to judge him a mad man. *2 King. 9. 11.* When a Prophet came to anoint *Jehu*, said his Companions, *Wherefore comest thou mad fellow?* Prophets were reputed mad fellows, and that not onely by the Jewes, but by Gentiles also. *Plato in Phaedro saith, Quidam divino beneficio sunt insani, ut Prophetæ & Sibyllæ*, and *Tullie in his 2. Book de divinationibus, Quid habet autoritatis furor iste quem Divini vocatis, ut quæ sapiens non videt & videat insanus, & is qui humanos sensus amiserit, divinos assentur sit: & vaticinari idem sit quod insanire.* This opinion was also in the Apostles time, *Act. 26. 24. Festus the Governour of Syria tells Paul, that he was besides himselfe, that much learning had made him mad.*

Martyr in 2 King. 9. 11, Kimchi thinks that the Prophets were so call'd quod dum vaticinantur speciem præferrent hominibus alienati cum à mente, sum à sensibus.

In the Metaphoricall sense take it thus; The Jewes cannot endure thee, nor thy prophecy, they are so bitter, so rebellious, obstinate, and set against thee, that they will not suffer thee to look out of doores, and come among them; they decline thee and thy Prophecy, they will not endure either of them, and so thou art as a prisoner and man in bands; not that he had any materiall bands

C c c

upon

upon him, but was bound up in this sense; their finnes were the Prophets bonds; and we may take up this observation from it; That peoples sins doe imprison and imbondage the spirits of the Prophets, and so hinder the course of the Word. This *Paul* knew, and therefore requests the *Colossians* to pray, *That God would open to him and others a doore of utterance*, Col. 4. 3. that they might not be straitned in the work of their Ministry; Mens finnes doe silence the Ministers, and send them to prisons; if you look not well to it, your finnes may quickly make this good.

I incline to the literall sense, and then it's doubtfull who bound the Prophet; *They shall put bands, &c.* Not the Angels; though God use them in the Government of the world, yet wee finde not that God uses them to binde his Prophets. Some conceive it to be his friends and familiar acquaintance, and that it was done in love; if others had done it, they would have left him in custody other where, then in his own house; but without prejudice to any I conceive it came from the people, who either bound him, or bespake his binding. And my ground for it is this; He is made a Watchman to the House of *Isaiah*; in that capacitie and relation the Lord speaks unto him; here is no mention of any domestick friends, but of the people, it was they without, not they within; as is cleare from the words, *They shall put bands upon thee, and thou shalt not goe out among them.*

Observ. 1. Christ deales fairely, not fraudulently with his, he tells them at first what they must expect, not gold and silver, but bands and chaines, *They shall binde thee.* He told *Jeremy*, they shall fight against him, *Jere. 1. 19.* So *Paul* no sooner is called to preaching, but he heares of sufferings, *Act. 9. 16. I will shew him how great things he must suffer;* and *Mat. 24. 9.* Christ tells all the Apostles, that they must be afflicted, hated, killed; and this he doth in faithfulness, love, and wisdom, that they might not be deceived in looking for other kinde of entertainment in the world; that they might not have hard thoughts of him for hiding away such things from them, that they might be confirm'd against such evils when they fell out, and remember it was no more then the Lord foretold them of, *Job. 16. 2. They shall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, they shall kill you, and think they do God good service: and ver. 4. These things have I told you, that you may remember I told you of them when the time comes.*

2. No excellency exempts a Prophet from the malice of mens tongues and hands; *Ezekiel* is immediately call'd and sent by Christ, sees extraordinary Visions, hath much converse with Christ, is fill'd with the Spirit, yet all this keeps him not out of bands, they spake evill of him, and bound him. Christ himselve was all excellency, beauty, goodnesse, yet these preserved him not out of the hands of malice; there's nothing will satisfie it, but mens liberties and lives, malice feeds on such dainties.

3. The generality of people are enemies to their own good, and active to their own ruine: the house of *Israel* they are against the Prophet, they fetter and chain him up, and think they have done well, to make him secure from coming amongst them; and alas, what have they done? thrust away the Physician should cure them, shut out mercy by shutting up a Prophet, put out the light; and now are there not droves and multitudes of people that would think it a happinesse to get all the Prophets silenced, imprisoned, banished, if not more? they would live in darknesse, and die in darknesse, and so undo themselves for ever. Christ the great Prophet, the people, after all his precious Sermons and glorious Miracles, cry, *Away with this man, Crucifie him, crucifie him*, Luk. 23. 18, 21. They had cryed *Hosanna* formerly, but now the time being turn'd, they turn against Christ: there be many that shew some kindnesse outwardly to the Prophets, but inwardly they are against them.

4. Wicked ones deal severely, cruelly with the Prophets, when they fall into their hands; they put bands, not one or two, but many bands upon *Ezekiel*; and they were wreathed, wisted, heavie, thick bands, such as might not only hold, but hurt and pain the Prophet: when *Abab* had got *Micaiab* into his hands, he sends him to prison, and commands him to be fed with bread and water of affliction, that is, with so little and so unfavory, *ut longam potius mortem trahat, quam vitam sustentet*, he would kill him, *non brevi morte, sed lenta fame*. *Jeremiah*, the Princes are wroth with him, smite him, put him in the prison, *Jer.* 37. 15. yea, into the dungeon where he sunk into deep mire, and had perished, if *Ebed-melech* an *Ethiopian*, had not been more propitious to him, then his own Countreyemen the *Jews* were, *Jer.* 38. 6, 7. *Josephus* saith, Antiq. 10. they put him into a muddy pit, *ut ibi presocatus moreretur*, which might

might easily have been, for he was *usque ad collum mersus*; others think they aimed not at his present death, but thought, *Pedore & fame*, lingeringly to consume him: *Peter*, when he fell into *Herod's* hands, he was bound with two chaines, *Acts* 12. 6. You may observe something in that verse; there is a prison, chaines, souldiers, keepers, all these mentioned in it; which shew the severity of *Herod*. A bare prison had been too much for such an Apostle, but he must be chain'd, and with two chaines; and for feare he should get out of his chaines, he must be between two souldiers, which probably were more afflictive to his spirit with their oaths, &c. then the iron was to his body; and lest he should get from these, there was also the keepers at the dore, watching. *Paul* tells you how he was handled by wicked men: *2 Cor.* 11. 23, 24. *In stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft; of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrackt.*

5. Afflictive conditions seldome better mens spirits, they were in *Babylon* under captivity, and five yeeres passed in that condition, *Chapt.* 1. 2. and yet their proud hearts not humbled, their old enmity to the Prophets not worn out, *2 Chron.* 36. 15, 16, 17. God sent them Messengers, Prophets, and they mocked them, misused them, till the wrath came, and there was no remedy; and therefore he brought upon them the *Chaldeans*, who led them into captivity, where they were servants and slaves; their wronging of the Prophets was the cause of their suffering, and yet all their sufferings did not subdue their spirits, and work them to entertain the truth, and walk peaceably towards the Prophet; they bind him in the land of bondage: the Plough breaks the earth in many places, but doth not better it, but leaves it as it was, nothing is put in by the Plough; if the Master dung it, and sow good seed in it, when the Plough hath broken it, then there is like to be a harvest, but if nothing be sown, weeds, nettles, thorns will grow where the Plough hath been; and so afflictions may break our estates, our bodies, our sleep, yet if nothing be added, if God do not sanctifie them, the harvest will be tares, and not wheat.

6. It's no new thing for Prophets and Ministers to be roughly intreated, and laid by as uselesse things: *Ezekiel* 400. yeeres before Christ, is thus up, bound, kept from coming among the people,

people, and this misery hath befallen the Prophets in severall ages, 1 Km. 18:4. *Jehoiada* cut off the Prophets, and then they were hid by fifties in caves; *Jeremy* was shut up in the prison in the Kings Court, Jer. 32:2. most of the Prophets and Apostles were restrained from their publique employments, shut up in prisons, banisht or driven into corner, and that proves oft a great sadding to ingenuous spirits, not so much in that they suffer, but because they are out of employment, but let those are in such conditions, or may shortly be, consider it's no strange unwonted thing, such afflictions have been formerly, 1 Pet. 3:9. *The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world*; besides, God hath need of no men, nor any of their parte.

V E R. 26.

And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover; for they are a rebellious house.

HERE is a farther and full manifestation of his silence, but there is doubt concerning the meaning of the words. The *Septuagint* hath it, *I will bind thy tongue*; and this bond, it's conceiv'd, was a divine precept; God commanding him to be silent, and thereupon it was, that he forbore to speak unto them. O here take the words literally, and hold that the use of his tongue was taken away; so that neither in publique nor in private he might speak unto them, but be a wordlesse and tonguelesse man amongst them; whereupon they being troubled, and wondring at what had befallen *Ezekiel*, might search out the cause, and become more willing to heare those sad messages he had to deliver. But *salvo aliorum judicio*, I conceive the words are not to be taken in their literall sense.

1. Because the Prophet is bid in the next Chapter, *verse 9.* to prepare him meat, and to eat thereof, which he could not do, if his tongue had cleaved to the roof of his mouth; the motion of the tongue is needfull to that action.

2. It's

2. Its plain from the 14th verse of that 4th Chapter, that it cannot be meant literally; for there the Prophet speaks, *Then said I, oh Lord God, behold my soul hath not been polluted, &c.* We are then to take the words figuratively, thus; Thou shalt be as a man, whose tongue cleaves to his mouth, as a man that is dumb; such a one shalt thou be amongst them: and this sense the words following infer; Thou shalt not be to them a reprovor; they would not have thee to tell them of their sins, of my judgements, and the danger thereupon; *And thou shalt not be a reprovor unto them:* and it's the Scripture language to call them dumb that are in the place of Ministers and Prophets, and preach not, *Isa. 56. 10.*

Observ. 1. The Lord hath the power over Prophets lips, to shut and open them at his pleasure: *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, &c.* If God forbid the Prophets to speak, they must be dumb, as contrary, if he command they cannot be silent: *Amos 3. 8. The Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?* The *Jewes* objected against the Prophets, that they prophesied no good unto them, onely sad things, and were messengers of death; the Prophet answers, it's true, but God hath commanded, he hath spoken, and who can be silent? who shall dare not to deliver and heare his message? he is a roaring Lion, will tear in pieces disobedient Prophets and people, he was to speak, and to be silent when God would have it so. *Balaam* knew this, *Numb. 22. 38. Lo, I am come unto thee, O Balaam; have I now any power at all to say anything? can I with canning do any thing? so is the Hebrew; the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak;* it was in God to open or shut his mouth; he could not with all his canning do ought: *Prov. 16. 1. The preparations of the heart in man, and answer of the tongue is from the Lord;* and so the silence of the tongue, and cessation of the spirit in man, is from the Lord; Prophets are to be silenced and suspended, not when Prelates, people will, but when the Lord will.

2. People are impatient of reproofs; *Thou shalt not be a reprovor unto them; for they are rebellious,* they would not endure him to deal roughly with them, to convince them of their sins; many affect the Prophets being shining lights, but when they are burning lights they hate them; when they scorch men wth through reproofs and evident convictions of their guiltiness, then they hate

hate them, and seek to mischieve them; *Iſa.* 29. 21. He that re-
 proved in the gate had a ſnare laid for him; and *Micaiah* is a
 hatefull man to *Abab*, *1 King.* 22. 8. becauſe he prophesied not
 good to him; reproofs are *veritates mordaces*, they have ſalt and
 fire in them, which few men can indure, eſpecially being fore; and
 therefore they will imprifon and murder the Prophets; *Put this
 fellow into priſon*, ſaith *Abab*, *verſ.* 27. *Lea John* reprove *Herod*, and
 he is preſently clapt into a priſon, *Luk.* 3. 19. Reproofs evidence to
 men, that their ſins are known, awaken guilt, and croſſe them in
 the things they love, and therefore they cannot indure them; like
Mofes rod in hand, it was without hurt, but thrown down it be-
 came a Serpent; ſo reproofs thrown forth prove Serpents to men,
 they moleſt and ſting them.

3. The peoples ſins do cauſe God to cut them ſhort of ſpiritu-
 all mercies; here was a Prophet furniſhed with the treaſure of
 heaven, and the Lord ſhuts up his mouth, and makes him a dumb
 Prophet unto them; and why ſo? *for they are a rebellious houſe*, they
 did not profit under their judgements, they ſtill undervalued their
 Prophets, they went on ſtubbornly in their wayes againſt God;
 and this made God deny them the benefit of the Prophets labours:
 unbelief, irreformation, and ingratitude, are provoking ſins, and
 God puniſhes people for them and ſuch like, with the removall
 of his Word and Prophets: in *Amos* 8. the Lord tels them, there
 ſhall be howlings in the Temple, dead bodies in all places, *verſ.* 3.
 that their Sun ſhould go down at noon, their feaſts be turned in-
 to mournings, and ſuch mournings, as are for an onely ſon, deep
 and laſting, *verſ.* 8, 9. and why ſo? they had ſinned greatly in
 ſleighting, and being weary of Gods Sabbaths and Ordinances,
 they were covetous, they oppreſſed the poore, &c. and now God
 would ſend a famine of the Word, *verſ.* 11. and there would be
 howlings, darkneſſe and death above meaſure; it's a dreadfull
 thing, when people provoke God to take away his Prophets by
 death, to command them ſilence, or to remove them into corners.
 The Prophets and Miniſters are the light and ſalt of the earth,
 if God take them away, people will be unfavoury, full of worms,
 noyſome luſts and corruptions, they will be in darkneſſe, and
 haſten to eternall darkneſſe; it's the Word that makes all ſweet
 and comfortable, if that go, Gods face is hid, his preſence departed,
 and

Idcirco tibi praedicationis sermo tollitur, quia dum me in suis actibus plebs exasperat, non est digna cui exhortatio veritatis fiat.
 Greg. Hom. 17. in Evang.

and all lyes open to ruine, it's the sins of the people that introduce such a judgement. God takes away his Word, and the preachers of it, because the peoples lives are exasperating, not comformable to what is taught; This judgement wee may feare in this Land, because the distance is exceeding great between Gods Word and our lives; I will not prophecy, but pray; The Lord prevent and divert such a judgement from *England*; if it should come, it would be the most dreadfull that befell the Land these fourscore yeares; afflictions you are like to meet withall, and pressing ones; but that I may not discourage your hearts, cast your eyes and thoughts upon that promise in *Isa. 30. 19, 20.* *He will be very gracious unto thee at the voyce of thy cry, when he shall heare it, he will answer thee, and though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more. The word in Hebrew is, lo iineph, thy teachers shall not be winged, and fly from thee when danger is, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thou shalt heare a voyce behinde thee, &c.* This is spoken of the Church under the Gospel, as well as before; if you can therefore take hold of this promise, and cry earnestly unto God, you shall not lose your teachers, and the truth, though you lose your estates and outward comforts; if God should take away your teachers from you, it would be an Argument of much wrath, and that this people is unworthy of spirituall mercies.

Lam. 3. 9.

V E R. 27.

But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them; Thus saith the Lord God; He that beareth, let him bear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear; for they are a rebellious house.

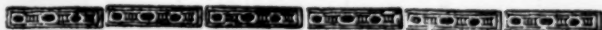
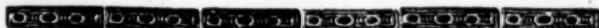
THe greatest part of this verse hath been spoken of in the 13th verse of this Chapter, and fifth verse of the second Chapter; and therefore shall not need now to be opened unto you.

Observ. 1. All times are not times for the Prophets to speak in: Thy mouth is now shut, and it's not seasonable for thee to prophecy, but hereafter when I shall speak with thee, I will open thy mouth. Prophets must therefore waite upon God, as for warrant

to speak, so for libertie and opportunitie of speaking. *Amos 5. 13. The prudent shall keep silence in that time.* There be times when God in judgement to a people, would not have them speak. *Eccles. 3. 7. There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;* and both these the Lord will shew his servants.

2. Neither the Prophets infirmities, nor the peoples sinnes, shall alwayes keep the Prophets mouths shut; *When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, &c.*

3. God tryes many wayes with a finfull wretched people to gaine them; he sends them into Captivitie, gives them a Prophet there, shuts up his mouth, opens it againe, and all to see what this people will doe; *I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say, thus saith the Lord; He that beareth, let him heare, &c.* There are but few amongst you, who will heare, I am afraid, but if any will heare, *let him heare, &c.* God will try men whether they are curable or no.



D d d

Ezekiel,



Ezekiel, Chap. 4. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

1. *Then also Sonns of man, take thee a tyle, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the Citie, even Jerusalem.*
2. *And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the Camp also against it, and set battering rammes against it round about.*
3. *Moreover, Take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the Citie, and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it: This shall be a signe to the House of Israel.*



N the three former Chapters, you have had the Preface, now we are to come to the Prophecie in self, in this Chapter and the next is a Prophecy against Jerusalem, the chiefe Citie of the Jewes; the besieging of it, and miseries attend that condition are laid downe therein.

This Chapter hath in it these parts:

1. A typicall besieging of Jerusalem in the 8. first verses.
2. A great famine during this siege, and that is in the 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 verses; and this is aggravated from the eating of polluted bread bak't in dung, vers. 12, 13, 14, 15.

I shall begin with the typicall besieging of the Citie; the Jewes that yet lived at Jerusalem, trusted in their strength and priviledges, were secure, fearing no dangers; they accounted them fooles and weak ones, who had yeilded themselves into the hands of the Babylonians, and because Jeremiah had counsell'd them to doe it, and prophesied hard things against Jerusalem, they dealt roughly with him, and got him imprison'd; Here therefore the Lord set our Prophet a work to lay siege against Jerusalem, to batter it with warlike instruments, that so the captives with him might not repent them

of what they had done, nor those at *Jerusalem* put off any longer the evill day; cry, Peace, peace, when destruction was at hand.

In the first verse the Prophet is commanded to draw the picture of *Jerusalem*, and that upon a tile; in the other two, to represent the actions of men besieging a Citie.

Take thee a tile.

לכנה

The Hebrew word *Labenah*, is a brick or a tile, it's questioned whether one greene or one dyed, and if dyed, whether in the Sun or fire, and whether white or red, which I will passe over as not being of any great moment: It signifies also any figure that is foursquare, and so any table or thing that may be ingraven upon; and because it's from a roote in Hebrew, that is to be white; it's conceived to be a table of chalke, or some other whitish stone, in the forme of a brick or tile, whereon incision might easily be made; bricks and tiles are neither white, nor easily admit ingravement.

Portray upon it the Citie, even Jerusalem.

That is, expresse the picture of it by incision and engraving in the same; it's more then describing with the pen, or pencil.

The Citie being pictured upon the tile or table, he is commanded in the next verse to lay siege to it, and so builds a fort, casts a mouit, sets a Camp and battering Rammes against it; and hereby shewes what the *Chaldeans* should shortly doe against *Jerusalem*.

A fort.

ריק

The Hebrew word is *Daeck*, and diversly expounded by the learned; *Rabbi Solomon* thinks it to be an Engine to throw stones within the wallee, which might annoy them; The *Chaldee* renders it, *Machinas*, Engines; The *Vulgar*, *Muqiriones*, Defences for the Souldiers, and such as might prevent the flight of adversaries. Some other Rabbies think it to be a wooden Tower, out of which they threw stones and weapons to batter the walls and brain the Citizens. *Viruvius* saith, that some of them were 120. cubits high, some 60. some lesse, and 20 cubits broad at least. The *Septuagint* hath it, *προμαχῶνας propugnacula*, Strong holds, Block-houses, Fortresses;

Lib. 10.

Vid. Joseph.

Lib. 10. Antiq.

cap. 11. & 6.

de bel. Jud.

Fortresses; and so it agrees with our translation, *Foris*; 2 King. 25. 1. when Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem with his forces, they built forts against it.

Cast a mount against it.

Solela, it's per enallagen numeri, a singular number for a plurall, cast mounts against it. The word is from *Salal*, which is to raise up the way, *aggesta terra*, when stones, turfs, and other earth are heaped up together, that makes a mount. Job 19. 12. *The troop is come together, and raise up their way against me*; it's the same word: when they besieged Townes, it was their manner to raise mounts before them, that they might come without hurt to the walls.

סלה

Set the Camp;

Or pitch tents against it, draw out forces, and let them sit downe before the Citie.

Set battering rammes against it.

The word *Carim*, signifies *rammes*, living creatures; and here it's put for a warlike instrument, which was made with an iron head and hornes like a ramme, to batter and break down the walls of Cities; it was drawne back by a great number of men, and then driven on with violence against the wall, and so made breaches in them; and hence it had its name, because in forme it was like a ramme, & *adversa fronte in muros incurrebat*; Some understand here the chiefe Leaders in the Armie, that like as Rams are the leaders in the flocks, so Princes, Nobles, Generalls, Collonells, and Captains are leaders in Armies. 2 King. 11. 4. 19. The word *Captaine* there is the same in Hebrew with that here for *Rammes*, and notes the chiefe Leaders; but in this place we are to take it for Military instruments, which at the command of the chiefe ones were employed.

כרים

Take thee an iron pan, & set it for a wall of iron between thee & the city.

The Hebrew is, *a pan of iron*. The Hebrew by this doth note out the hard-heartedness of the *Jewes*; they were as iron or brasse, inflexible before God: others set out by it the great wrath of God against *Jerusalem*, which now was come to that height, that no sacrifice,

מתכת ברזל

sacrifice, no prayers or tears could divert or abate: *Lam. 3. 44. Thou hast covered thy self with a cloud, that our prayers should not passe thorow.* This pan stood as a wall between the City and the Prophet; a great impediment between God and them; so that neither their prayers or miseries should come up to God, nor his mercies descend upon them, according to that in *Isa. 59. 2. Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not beare;* others think it notes out miseries and tortures the Jew should suffer from the King of *Babylon*, when he besieged and took *Jerusalem*; this pan was such an one as they used to fry things in: and *Jerem. 29. 22.* it's said, that *Abab* and *Zedekiah* were roasted in the fire by the King of *Babylon*; they suffered hard things, they were fried in the pan of afflictions; and this sense agrees with that of *Jeremiah*, Chap. 1. 13. who saw a seething pot from the North, which set out the terrible afflictions *Nebuchadnezzar* should boile the *Jewes* in. There may be some truth in these severall senses, but we may, I conceive, understand by this iron pan, set between the Prophet & the City, the firm resolution of *Nebuchadnezzar* to besiege this City, to continue it till he had obtained his design, he would not be moved from it, but be as inflexible as iron, and as unmovable in it as a settled wall: or to goe a little higher, the resolution of God himself by *Nebuchadnezzar* to besiege and destroy this City, and that without remedy; for the Prophet besieging the City acted Gods part, and this iron pan sets out his firm purpose to besiege them, and his implacable displeasure against them; which is also noted in these words;

Set thy face against it:

Which, as *Pradus* saith, is *Severitatis signum gestusque Judicis constantis in decreto, qui nullius auctoritate, precibus, aut fleibus commoveatur ad veniam;* and this noted out Gods setting his face against them, of which he told them, *Jerem. 21. 10. I have set my face against this City for evil, and not for good, saith the Lord; it shall be given into the hand of the King of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.*

This shall be a sign to the House of Israel.

Here was the end of all, that the *Jewes* at *Jerusalem* might no longer trust in the lying words of false Prophets, which promised safety

Vultus obfirmatus non annuit deprecanti.

safety to them and their City, whereupon they derided those were gone into *Babylon*, and insulted over them; and likewise that those in captivity with the Prophets might lay aside all thoughts of returning again into their Countrey, and see it mercy that they were from *Jerusalem*, which was to undergo the greatest wrath of the Lord.

Obfer. 1. The Lord deals with his people not only by his Word, but also by signes and types; here is a *Tile*, and *Jerusalem* pourtraid upon it; here are forts, mounts, tents, rams, iron bands, all which typed out Gods dealing with *Jerusalem*, and in this language God had expressed himself: by the Rainbow in the heavens God speaks to the world, Circumcision, the Paschal Lamb, the High Priests Garments, the stones in *Aarons* breast, the sprinkling things with blood, did all signifie and type out something to the people; so *Jeremiabs* seething pot, *Chap.* 1. his linnen girdle, and bottles with wine, *Chap.* 13. the Potters vessell, *Chap.* 19. the bucket of figs, *Chap.* 24. and yokes of iron, *Chap.* 28. and so all the Parables in the old and new Testament, they utter forth the mind of God. God hath throughout his Word abundantly expressed himself this way; and the Lord doth it, because types and figures make truth more evident and efficacious. The Word affects the eare, types and figures affect the eye, and carry a greater efficacy with them then simple and plain speech. The Parable of the barren fig-tree, lost sheep, prodigall son, ten virgins, &c. had much life and efficacy in them; so when Christ took a little childe and set before his Disciples, *Matth.* 18. it wrought more effect upon them then many words, and left deeper impression in them; wee may therefore see the goodness of the Lord in it, that affords us such helps in his Word as may affect our hearts most.

2. That the Lord knows things to come, and reveals them at his pleasure; he knew that *Jerusalem* should be besieged by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and discovers it unto the Prophet, and causes him to make a draught of it: which shews a difference between the true God and all others; they cannot foresee and foretell things to come, are not Gods, but the God of *Israel* can fore-see things, though afar off; *Psal.* 139. 2. *Thou understandest my thoughts afar off, even from all eternitie*; and he only foretels things that fall not within the reach of created abilities; he fore-told the *Messiah*, the
Egyptian

Egyptian and Babylonian captivity, and times of both; there is nothing future hid from God, we know not what shall be to morrow, *7 am.* 4. 14. but God knowes what shall be to morrow, next yeare, yea, hundreds and thousands of yeares hence, if time be so long, and this proclaims him to be God, even the only true God: *I sa.* 41. 21, 22, 23. God calls there to other gods, to bring forth their reasons, wherby to prove their divinity, let them shew what's past, and things that are to come, and then he will take them for strong reasons, and acknowledge them gods with himselfe; but to tell things past and things to come, can none but the Lord himselfe, and they to whom he reveals them.

3. Gods appointment and authority makes things and actions mean and ridiculous in the eyes of the world, to be waighty and of great use: It seems to carnall reason a childish thing, that the Prophet should take a *Tile*, draw the Citie upon it, make forts, mounts, warlike engines to batter it, yea, to take a *paw of iron* and set between him and the City; *these* men of the world are apt to look at as ridiculous, much like the practice of boyes in a snow, that make forts, mounts, &c. in sport; but be not deceived, what the infinite wise God commands, is of great concernment, how mean so ever the things and actions about those things appeare, the legall worship if you look upon it in it self, seems strange that they should kill so many beasts, burn them to ashes; that the Tabernacle, and things belonging to it, should be sprinkled with bloud; that they must refrain from such meats, be unclean if they touch such things; that they must be circumcised, eat a paschall Lamb, &c. I say, if wee look at them externally, they seem irrational things, but if wee eye God commanding them, they had an excellency, and were of great use to them, and instruments of much good; now *bread*, *wine*, *water* in Baptisme, and the Supper of the Lord seem mean things, and such they are, as are common to the world, but Christs appointment to use these, makes the difference, that gives *dignitatem & pondus*, so that they are of great vertue to them that rightly partake of them; the Pope and his Prelates have commanded and brought much into the worship of God, *Quicquid poterat desiderari ad eximium splendorem*; but it's foolish, unsavory, unprofitable, and efficacious only to make voyd the Ordinances and Commands of God; and why? because the

Lord

Lord never commanded such things ; that is contemptible in the eye of man, being commanded of God is honourable and efficacious, when that is pompous, decent, honourable in the eye of the world, being not commanded of God, is despicable, fruitlesse and frivolous.

4. God is an enemy to sinfull Cities ; he bids the Prophet lay siege to *Jerusalem*, and to batter it ; he commands the ruine of a City, is an enemy to that City ; *Ezek. 5. 8. Behold, I, even I am against thee, saith the Lord ; Jerusalem was once beloved, it was Gods rest and desire, Psal. 132. 13, 14. a faithfull City ; Isa. 1. 21. a holy City, Isa. 52. 1. the City of the Lord ; Isa. 60. 14. but now it was become an harlot, full of murthers, the Princes of it were rebellious and companions of thieves, Isa. 1. 21, 23. the sins of Jerusalem were very great ; you may reade largely of them in the 16th of Ezekiel, where you may find, that Jerusalems sins and provocations exceeded Sodom and Samaria's, shee justified them in their abominations, they were little, not the half of Jerusalem ; and therefore this made the Lord to say, Jer. 32. 31. This City hath been to me a provocation of mine anger, or, for a provocation of mine anger, and of my fury, from the day that they built it, even unto this day, that I should remove it from before my face: there was no rank of men but had greatly provoked him, Kings, Princes, Priests, Prophets, men of Judah, and Inhabitants of Jerusalem, vers. 32. and therefore God was resolved to destroy it, and to make it a curse to all Nations, Jerem. 26. 6. and pronounced a woe to it in Zeph. 3. 1. where yee farther see what a City Jerusalem was now become, and what her Citizens were. Wo to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing City ; She obeyed not the voyes, she received not correction, she trusted not in the Lord, shee drew not near to her God ; Her Princes within her like roaring Lions ; her Judges are evening Wolves, they gnaw not the bones till to morrow ; Her Prophets are light and treacherous persons: her Priests have polluted the Sanctuary, they have done violence to the Law, the just Lord is in the midst thereof, &c. And in the 6th verse, their Cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, no Inhabitant. Sin makes God to lay wast great Cities ; Tyre, Sidon, Sodom, Gomorrah, Babylon, Jerusalem, felt the stroke and strength of Gods wrath.*

5. Nothing secures a sinfull City from ruine; let it be strongly

E e e

built,

built, well fortified, abound with souldiers and munition, have great priviledges, yet all these protect it not from invasion, from destruction; *Jerusalem* is besieged, ruin'd, burnt with fire, this *Jerusalem* was the City of *David*, 1 King. 9. 24. and God did great things for *David*'s sake; *Isa.* 37. 35. it was the holy City; *Neb.* 11. 18. a strong Citie; *Psal.* 31. 21. the joyous City; *Isaiah* 32. 13. the City of solemnities; *Isa.* 33. 20. the perfection of beauty, and joy of the whole earth; *Lam.* 2. 15. it was the Citie had the Temple, the Oracles and Ordinances of God, and greatest priviledges that ever City had; therefore it's said, *Kings should bring presents thither*, *Psal.* 68. 29. it was the City that God himself chose above all others, to put his name there; 1 King. 14. 21. and hereupon it was call'd oft the Citie of God; *Psal.* 46. 4. the City of the great King; *Psal.* 48. 2. the City of the Lord of hosts, ver. 8. and for her situation, it was among mountains, *Psal.* 125. 2. had towers and bulwarks, *Psal.* 48. 12, 13. and was accounted impregnable; *Lam.* 4. 12. *The kings of the earth, and all the Inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the enemy should have entred into the gates of Jerusalem: it was conceived to be of invincible strength; therefore the Jebusites when David came to take it, placed the lame and blind to defend it, thinking them sufficient to keep out David and all his strength; 2 Sam.* 5. 6, 7, 8. But notwithstanding all these particulars, this was the Citie to be visited; *Jerem.* 6. 6. and why? shee was wholly oppression in the midst of her, shee cast out wickednesse as a fountain waters, *Verf.* 7. this was the Citie to be besieged and made desolate; *Jer.* 19. 8. yea a curse; *Jer.* 26. 6. *Niniveh* was the great Citie; *Jon.* 1. 6. but it's greatnesse preserved it not; *Neb.* 3. *Babylon* was the golden City, and yet it ceased; *Isa.* 14. 4. *Jerusalem* exceeded all in favoure, in priviledges, in promises of safety, yet this City is invaded, taken, and laid even with the ground, let none therefore confide in Cities, in any created strength, in any arme of flesh; men are exceeding apt to doe it: some trust in Chariots, some in horses, some in Cities, some in Princes and great men, but you will finde horses, and Chariots, and Cities vain things, and for men, that there is no trusting in them at any tme, therefore saith *David*, *Trust in the Lord at all times; yee people, powre out your hearts before him, God is a refuge for us; other things*

things are not: and because you will think men are considerable, he addes, *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, they will deceive if you confide in them.*

6. The sins of a people and City may be so provoking, at such a heighth, that neither God nor man will shew mercy to them. God bids him set an iron pan between him and them; shewing, that both himself and the Army that he should bring, would be as iron to them; they had iron hearts and necks, *Isa. 48. 4.* and would not yeeld to God, and now he would be so to them, and cause their enemies also to be such; God would set his face against them, and the faces of their adversaries. Great sinnes make God inexorable, severe; *Ezek. 14. 13, 14.* *When the Land sinnes grievously, I will stretch out my hand, and cut off man and beast; and though Noab, Job and Daniel were in it, they should deliver but their own souls;* all their prayers, tears, righteousnesse, interest in God should extend no farther then themselves. God now had shut his eyes, and would not look upon them; he had stopt his ears, and would not heare them praying, nor others for them, he was set against them, resolved to punish them; therefore no miseries, no complaints, no sufferings of the living, or groans of the dying could prevail with him; and when the Army came, it used them severely enough.

7. The Lord sends out his Declarations before he causes destructions: this shall be a sign to the house of *Israel*: God steals not upon men by publique judgements before they heare of them, but tells them of their coming while they be at some distance. The Prophets heare of them, and they proclaim and discover them some way or other; this fact of the Prophets would quickly spread and be at *Jerusalem*, and so might be a warning unto them; God sends out the lightning before hee thunders, hee frownes before he smites, and gives tokens of his coming in wrath before he executes it.

V E R. 4, 5, 6, &c.^c

Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it, according to the number of the dayes that thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt beare their iniquity.

5. For I have laid upon thee the yeeres of their iniquity, according to the number of the dayes three hundred and ninety dayes. So shalt thou beare the iniquity of the house of Israel.
6. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt beare the iniquity of the house of Judah forty dayes: I have appointed thee each day for a yeere.
7. Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege at Jerusalem, and thine arme shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesie against it.
8. And behold, I will lay hands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn thee from one side to another, till thou hast ended the dayes of thy siege.

IN these Verses the Prophet proceeds in the typicall besieging of Jerusalem, and the words declare to us the duration of the siege, which was to be many dayes, and the cause of it, their iniquity.

The word *Iniquity* notes here, not sinne, but the punishment of sin, and in that sense it's oft used in sacred language; *Iſa.* 53. 6. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; that is, the punishment of our sin; and *Pſal.* 69. 27. *addes iniquity unto their iniquities*; that is, *puniſh their iniquity*; punishment is an inseperable companion of sin, and therefore it hath the name of sin. And the Prophet was to beare their iniquity; that is, the punishment of it; this he did representatively, by this act of lying upon his side so long, setting out the long-suffering of God, who had born with the sins of this people, and not punished them as they deserved; our Prophet did not here represent Christ, who bare our iniquities, but at the command of God he sustained the person of the ten Tribes and kingdome of Judah, and therefore it's said, verse 5. *I have laid upon thee the yeeres of their iniquity*; I have appointed thee by lying on thy side so many dayes, to represent the time they have offended me by their Idolatries and sins attending the same, and so to set out my patience, and aggravate the punishment of their sin: Christ bare the sins of men to take away the punishment of it; the Prophet, to increase the same:

For

For our better understanding of these *Hieroglyphicall* passages in the Verses read, we shall make inquiry into sundry things.

1. Whether our Prophet did in the *litterall* sense lye so many dayes upon his side, or was it only in Vision?

Some make it really, and say *Ezekiel* did lye upon his side all the dayes are mentioned, although he slept not all the time, yet he lay in that posture, and that it was by speciall help of God, if nature could not of it self reach unto it; yet its related of a Noble man of *Louain*, who lay sixteen years in one posture, viz. with his face upwards; and *Pradus* saith, he saw a mad man which had lien upon one side fifteen years: *Theodoret* thinks he lay bound all this time, and felt most grievous pain, that so he might represent the great miseries of *Jerusalems* siege, which suffered great famine.

This opinion hath many and great Authors; yet I must joyne with those who are for the Prophets visionall lying on his side: for besides that nature could not bear it; how shall we clear the justice of God, that should for the Idolatries and sins of others, which former Prophets had reprov'd, so greatly afflict and punish one innocent.

Again, he was to prepare himself bread, *Vers. 15. of this Chap.* he was to set his face against the mountains of *Israel*, *Chap. 6. v. 2.* and if he lay still all these dayes on his sides, how could either of these be done? Its also said in the 8. *Chap. v. 1. In the sixth year, in the sixth moneth, in the fifth day of the moneth, as I sat in my house, and the Elders of Judah before me, the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me; if Ezekiel did in the letter lye so many dayes, the time was not expired; for the Prophet had his first vision in the fifth year of the captivity, the fourth moneth, and the fifth day, Chap. 1. v. 12. and seven dayes after this vision he had another, Chap. 3. v. 15. which made it the twelfth day of that moneth, and on that day he was commanded to lye on his side; and if you reckon from thence, you will find not above 413. as *Pradus* reckons it, or 418. and then if you joyn the days the Prophet lay on his side, they amount to 430 So it will then appear the Prophet had twelve or seventeen dayes to lye on his side when the Text saith, *he sat before the Elders*, this lying therefore is to be taken visionally, not really.*

2. What the lying on the left side points out unto us; and why the iniquity of *Israel* is layd upon that side. There is some mystery

mystery in it, and the opinions of men are different: some make the reason of it to be the situation of *Samaria*, which was the head City of the ten Tribes, *Iſa.* 7. 9. and this City was on the left hand of *Jerusalem*, *Ezek.* 16. 46. and thereupon the Prophet lay on his left side, to represent them and their sins, and on his right to represent the House of *Judah* and their sins: but beyond this, there is something to be taken hold of, and its this; the left side or hand notes disreſpect; the right side or hand, dignity or favour, *Mat.* 25. 34. 41. the good were on the right hand, the bad on the left. By this posture of the Prophet, is tyed out to us the different respect of God to the house of *Israel* and *Judah*; the ten Tribes were lesse deare to God then the other; they had grievous sins, and God would shew them lesse mercy, deale with them as those at his left side; but for *Judah*, whose sins was as great as theirs, yet God would chastise with lesse severity, he would not take away his loving kindnesse from *Judah*, though he did from *Israel*, *Judah* was at his right side, and God would in his distribution of sorrow and wrath remember mercy.

3. Whom we are to understand here by the house of *Israel*; the ten Tribes which are usually so cal'd in the Scripture, were carryed into captivity 130. years before by *Shalmaneser*, in the sixth year of *Hzechiah*, *2 Kings* 18. 9, 10. To what end therefore should they be brought in here, under a typicall siege of *Jerusalem*, when they sinned not at *Ierusalem*, and if they had, were now gone, and under the severity of God?

Some take the House of *Israel* to be meant distinctly of the ten Tribes; and this lying of the Prophet on his left side not to refer to *Ierusalem*'s siege, but to the sins of the Tribes, and the patience of God towards them; others include the House of *Israel* in the House of *Judah*, and so make not the Prophets literall lying to look at the ten Tribes in captivity, but at those of them who were joyn'd to the house of *Judah*; for when the great rent was by *Ieroboam*, all of the ten Tribes did not cleave to him; and many that at first did, afterwards seeing the evill of his Idolatrous wayes, withdrew from him, and closed with the house of *Judah*, *2 Chron.* 11. 16, 17. when they saw what *Ieroboam* intended, those that set their hearts to seek God, came to *Ierusalem* to sacrifice, and strengthened the Kingdome of *Judah*; and in *Asa*'s dayes, many fell to him out

of

of *Ephraim*, *Manassib*, and *Simeon*, *2 Chron.* 15. 9. yea, in abundance; *Asa* being a good King, they came flocking to him, and willingly sat down under his shade: It is more then probable also that when *Shalmeser* came out against *Samaria*, and carried away the Tribes, that many fled to *Jerusalem*, and the parts there-about; for its sayd, in *2 Chron.* 30. 6. *That they escaped out of the hands of the King of Assyria*; and in the 11. Verse, that diverse of *Ashur*, *Manassib*, and *Zebulun* bumbled themselves, and came to *Jerusalem*; this was to receive the Pass-over, and then they returned to their possessions in their own Cities, *Chap.* 31. 1. so that there were some of the other Tribes left, which did partly mingle with them of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and partly dwell by themselves; these I conceive, our Prophet means by the house of *Israel*, and together with these their predecessors, which were dead, and in Captivity; and that because the three hundred and ninety dayes, which import so many years, as its expressed in the sixth verse of this Chapter, must needs fetch the house of *Israel* into this consideration from before the time of their Captivity, and that in the next thing we are to examine, namely, Where these three hundred and ninety dayes, typing out so many years, as to begin.

Various and intricate are the thoughts of men about the beginning and ending of these years; and it would take up much time to present them unto you, and perplex your thoughts much.

I will give you in this point not what my selfe, but the soundest Interpreters and Chronologers do judge the truth.

Funcius and *Bibliander*, two famous Chronologers, begin this accompt at the falling off of the ten Tribes, *1 Kings* 12. and so do Interpreters of much worth.

Lavater, *Polanus*, *Pradus*, *A Lapide*, and *Sanctius*, begin it at the beginning of the Jewish Monarchy, between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam*, then were the Calves set up at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and the ten Tribes became Idolatrous, and not onely *Jeroboam* and his Subjects, but *Rehoboam* and his likewise, forsooke the Lord, *2 Chron.* 12. 1.

From this time to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, were three hundred and ninety years, which will thus appeare:

Rehoboam

Reboam	{ well,	{ 3	yeares	2 Chron. 11. 17.
raign'd	{ after his rent,	{ 13		2 Chron. 12. 12.
Abijab, his son,		3	The account	2 Chron. 13. 1.
Asa		41	begins after	1 King. 15. 10.
Iehosaphat		25	the rent.	1 King. 22. 42.
Iehoram		8		2 Chron. 21. 5.
Abazia		1		2 Chron. 22. 2.
Asbaliab		7		2 Kings 11. 4.
Ioash		40		2 Kings 12. 1.
Amaziah		29		2 Kings 14. 2.
Azariah		52		2 Kings 15. 2.
Iotham		16		2 Kings 15. 33.
Abaz		16		2 Kings 16. 2.
Hezekiah		29		2 Kings 18. 2.
Manasses		55		2 Kings 21. 1.
Amon		2		2 Kings 21. 19.
Iosiah		31		2 Kings 22. 1.
Iehoahaz		0	3 Moneths	2 Kings 23. 31.
Iehoiakim		11		2 Kings 23. 36.
Iehoiachin		0	3 Moneths	2 Kings 24. 8.
Zedekiah		11		2 Kings 24. 18.

These summ'd, being added together, make up 390. yeares. *Iunius* begins this account at the 27. year of *Solomons* reign, when he and the people fell to Idolatry, and extends it to the 5. year after *Zedekiah's* captivity, but according to the account formerly given, this amounts to a greater summe: besides, *Solomon* did not by any publique Edi& set up Idolatry, nor abolish the true worship of God.

The next thing to be opened, is the forty days, referring to the house of *Iudab* in the 6. verse; and here its questioned whether these yeares are to be taken inclusively in the three hundred and ninety, or exclusively and distinct from them; some comprehend them in the three hundred and ninety days, because otherwise they would not be finished before the Vision in the 8 Chap. v. 1. as hath formerly been shewed; but the Prophets lying on his sides, being visionall, not reall, it makes not against a distinct exception of these forty years from the three hundred and ninety, for he might in a Vision see that he must beare the iniquity of the house of *Israel* three

three hundred and ninety dayes, and the iniquity of the house of *Judab* forty dayes, and this vision be overlong before either number of dayes were accomplished. Neither is that in the 9th Verse sufficient to prove these forty years are to be taken inclusively from the words, three hundred and ninety dayes shalt thou eat thereof. Some collect that the Prophet was to lye no longer on his sides then he was to eat of the meat prepared; if it had been said in the Verse, make thee bread according to the number of the days that thou shalt lye upon thy sides, this Argument had been strong, but its according to the number of the days thou shalt lye upon thy side, that was his left side, and so the Argument is unvalid. I conceive the forty years to be taken distinct from the other number, because in the 5. Verse you have the three hundred and ninety laid upon the Prophet to bear for the House of *Israel*; if forty be excepted out of them, then there remains three hundred and fifty, and it could not be said, *So shalt thou beare the iniquity of the house of Israel*; neither could it be said, *When thou hast accomplished them, lye again on thy right side*, he could not reach that number if forty years were cut off: and here is also a distinct command, *Lye again on thy right side*; that is, after those three hundred and ninety be finished, then turn thee to the other side, and lye on it forty days; these forty dayes for so many years, are not additional to the three hundred and ninety, but he is to begin again, and that forty years within the three hundred & ninety, yet not as part of them, or included in them, but as a new account, a day for a year, to represent Gods patience toward the house of *Judab*.

These forty years, some make to be the tyrannicall, bloody, and Idolatrous reign of *Manassab*, who having forty years opposed *Judab*, was carryed into captivity, and after ten years suffering return'd, purged out Idolatry, & for fifteen years served the Lord, *Quadragesima annis peccavit gravissime Israel tempore Manassis, qui quindecim tantum annis mansit in officio, & quadragesima peccavit.* 2 Chron. 33:33
Vatablus.
 These forty provoking years God bare with *Judab*. Others begin the time of these forty years from the thirteenth of *Josabab*, unto the end of *Zedekiab*, the space between these is forty years; God now looked for a reformation, but they became worse and worse, as by 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. doth evidently appear: whether we pitch these forty years upon *Manassab*'s ill reign, or the time after,

is not much materiall; so many years did the Lord beare with *Judab* in a speciall manner; only take notice, that some reckon these forty years not from the thirteenth of *Josiah*, but from the eighteenth, wherein was the covenant renewed between God and the people, and then they reckon five years after the Captivity of *Zedekiah*, so make up the forty years; for its the opinion of learned men, that it was five years after his carrying away, that *Nebuzardan* came and burnt both Temple and City.

Some make the three hundred and ninety dayes, not only to set out Gods patience, but to demonstrate the time of *Jerusalems* siege, and Gods just hand in it, which upon due observation will be found to be just so many dayes, although there be a great difficulty to make it evident: for in *Jer.* 52. 4, 5, 6. you may read that in the ninth year of *Zedekiahs* reign, the tenth moneth, and tenth day, *Nebuchadnezzar* besieged *Jerusalem*, and that his siege lasted to the eleventh year of *Zedekiah*, the fourth moneth, and ninth day; now the time between comes up towards eighteen moneths, and makes five hundred thirty and nine dayes, which summe contains an hundred forty and nine dayes more then our Prophets three hundred and ninety, which make but thirteen moneths precisely, thirty dayes the moneth; so that here are five months more in this siege, according to *Jeremiah*, then we have in this type of *Ezekiel*. To clear this difficulty, we must take notice that in time of this siege, *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt* came to help *Zedekiah*, and raised the siege, *Jer.* 37. 5. Then *Pharaohs* army was come forth out of *Egypt*, and when the *Chaldeans* that besieged *Jerusalem*, heard tidings of them, they departed from *Jerusalem*: and so *Ver.* 11. its thought they brake up the siege to go and meet *Pharaohs* army, which being discomfited, turn'd back to *Egypt*, and the *Chaldeans* to *Jerusalem*, *Ver.* 7, 8. Five months were spent this way, which *Jeremiah* reckons in to the siege of *Jerusalem*. These our Prophet leaves out, and looks precisely at the time they were about *Jerusalem*, which was three hundred and ninety dayes, or thirteen moneths; and so you have this difficulty resolved.

Sanctus saith,
550.

Ver. 7. Set thy face toward the siege at *Jerusalem*.

That is, strengthen, harden thy face against them, be inexorable; and this notes out the obstinacy of the *Chaldeans* that should besiege

siege them; they were a resolute people, and would not be wearied out with difficulties, or easily hearken to intreaties; herein the Prophet takes on him the person of the enemy, and shewes he should be sterne against them.

Their arms shall be uncovered.

Souldiers of old were wont to have their arms naked in fight; the pictures of the ancient Warriors and Worthies are so painted, and P. *Africanus* upbraided *Salpistius Galbus*, *Quod inimicis nteretur nudicatis uti famine*; and some Interpreters say, that the *Indians* and *Africans* do it to this day, they fight with their arms naked; here it notes out the readinesse and diligence of the *Chaldeans*, whom our Prophet doth personate, to execute their resolution, and shortly to fight against *Jerusalem*; they would not come with faint hearts, or feeble hands, but as their faces were set against the City, so their arms were naked and prepared against it, not in their bosomes, in their pockets, not folded up, but naked and stretched out, ready to doe service, and so the Vulgar reads the word *extensum*, not uncovered, but stretched out, which implies the uncovering, and more; a like phrase to this you have in *Isa.* 52. 10. *The Lord haib made bare his boly arme*; as servants strip up their sleeves, make their arms bare, and ready for service, so the Lord made bare his arme, and put forth his power to doe some choyce service for his people. In this manner was the Prophet to prophesie unto the people.

Gellius l. 7.
c. 12.

Verf. 8. *I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn from one side to another, &c.*

Some make the bands reall, and take the words in a littéral sense; but we are to look at all herein as visionall: and here is commended the cause of the *Chaldeans* obstinacy and resoluteness: in this siege and ruine of *Jerusalem*, and that is the authority and command of God; he commanded the Prophet to lay siege to *Jerusalem*, to lye on his side till he had ended the dayes of his siege; and by the band of his power he held him so to it in the Vision, that he could not do otherwise; and this typed out the authority and power of God in the King of *Babylon* towards his souldiers, who should hold them so to the siege of *Jerusalem*, that they should not depart till they had accomplished it. Their going away to meet

the Egyptian army, and drive that back was in order to the siege of Jerusalem; and these military forces were as bands upon Jerusalem, whose condition the Prophet here sustain'd, and when the Chaldeans compassed the City about, they could not turn aside any way, till the firm decree of the Lord was accomplished.

Observ. 1. That God bears with the sins of his people, though great, a long time, and forbears the punishment due to them: three hundred and ninety years did he suffer them, which marvelously commends to us the patience of God; they provoked him daily, most bitterly, and did evil as they could: *Hos.* 12. 1. 14. and *Jerem.* 3. 5. yet God held his peace and his hands for hundreds of years; and therefore saith in *Ija.* 42. 14. *I have a long time holden my peace, I have been still, and refrained my selfe:* If God had not power in him to punish, his suffering with sinners so long were not so much; but God hath power enough to be avenged on all the sinners of the Earth; he could crush them as a moth in his hand, every moment; he hates sin with a perfect hatred, and yet he bears with notorious sinners, with all sinners and sins, deferring the punishment of them, sometimes a long season; so that he is not only patient, but long suffering, *1 Pet.* 3. 20. *The long suffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah, while the Arke was a preparing:* What did it wait for? even their repentance: Noah Preached unto them of the flood, warn'd them by preparing of an Ark, and God expected they should amend and turn to him, and it was an hundred years at least he waited upon that generation; and now, *the Lord is long-suffering,* *2 Pet.* 3. 9. *to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;* if we will not repent of our sin God will repent of his long suffering, his wrath will kindle, and we shall perish, be inexcusable, and have the deeper condemnation for abuse of his long suffering.

2. Though the Lord bear long with sinners, yet he forgets not their sins; they are in his book, sealed up in his bag, *Job* 14. 17. among his treasures, *Deut.* 32. 34. Its a speech borrowed from men that count up their Money, look over their Writings, and put them into bags, and seal them up, that they may be safe, and reserved for a long time; so God keeps mens sins safe by him, and that a long season, and then at length, when they have forgot them, he unseals the bag, and brings them forth, and shewes them

them how their sins have abounded, [what a treasury of sin they have, and what a treasury of wrath he hath, Rom. 2. 5. God he remembred the defection of *Israel*, which was almost three hundred and ninety years before; and however men think of their sins past, God will rub their memories, revive their consciences, and indict them for old sins: *Job* 13. 26. *Thou makest me possesse the iniquities of my youth*: *Job* 20. 11. *His bones are full of the iniquities of his youth*: *Psal.* 15. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth*. God presented before them their youthfull sins that had been committed many years before: *2 Sam.* 21. 1. *Saul was dead*, but his sin was alive, there was a triennall famine, and for whose sake was it? for *Sauls*, and his bloody House, because he slew the *Gibeonites*, which was done many years before; but here God remembers the sin, and visits it upon the heads of his sons, seven of them suffer for that sin. *Nab.* 1. 2. *The Lord reserves wrath*, he doth not presently punish sinners, but twenty, thirty, forty years after he reckons with them, and powres out the wrath reserved; when he hath had the glory of his patience, then God visits for old sins: *Isa.* 42. 4. God had been silent a long time; *Now will I cry like a travelling woman, I will destroy and devour at once*: patience being ended, Gods wrath begins and revives the guilt and sin that hath laine asleep so long; *Josephs* brethren being in affliction, their sins came to mind, *Gen.* 42. 21. *We are verily guilty concerning our brother*; they had sold him long before, above twenty years, and thought they should never hear of him, or their sine in the sale of him, but now in a strait God brings that sin to memory; sin is not over when its acted, but may be heard of many years after: its likely now in these afflictive times, that many meet with their old sins, and they lye hard upon them; let that be the prayer of such, which you find, *Psal.* 79. 8. *O remember not against us former iniquities, Let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us, for we are brought low*; and take heed of finning for the future against God, for be sure your sin will find you out; *Num.* 32. 23. and be thorns, not in your flesh, but in your consciences; old sins will be old Serpents, sting unto death: *Isa.* 10. 3. *What will you doe in the day of visitation?* *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the dayes that I shall deal with thee?*

3. Such is the nature of States and Churches, that falling into
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sinfull wayes they seldome return, but proceed, adding sin to sin, filling up the measure of their iniquities; *Jeroboam* makes a rent, layes a foundation in Idolatrous practices, and the House of *Israel* continue in that way three hundred and ninety years, not one king of *Israel* right. *Solomon* he goes out by the inticing of his wives to fals worship, he corrupts *Judah*, leavens it with Idolatry, & not all the good Kings in *Judah* could get out that leaven again perfectly; if there were a stop of Idolatrous passages made in one Kings reign, there was liberty granted in another. Idolatry and other sins so abounded in *Abaz*, *Manasses*, and *Zedekiah*s days, that the Lord was weary of them, and not quiet till he had rejected them. And this is not only so in States and Churches, but also in particular cases: if men fall into any way of wickednesse, so corrupt is nature, so prone unto sin, that it persists unto its own perdition, rather then returns to its own salvation; it must be a mercifull and powerfull hand of God that reduceth a straying sinner, much more a straying State.

4. That length of time is no good plea for errors; false worship, sinfull customes and practices, they could plead hundreds of yeares for their high places, Calves, *Samaritan* Rites, Altars, Priests, &c. yet antiquity would not exempt them from guilt and punishment; he must bear the iniquity of the House of *Israel*, they had sinned in the erection, use, and retention of these, and God had visited, and would yet visit more for them: what if we have had Prelacy and Popery, Ceremonies and Superstitious rites among us hundreds of years? they are plants not of Gods planting and through age so rotten, that they need plucking up, and it will be his honour whose shoulder and strength is employed that way.

5. The Lord shewes more favour to his, sinning great sins, then he doth to others that are not his; the House of *Israel* hath the left side, is *Loammi*, none of Gods people, and therefore utterly rejected, sent into captivity, and return not; the House of *Judah* hath the right side, God would shew them favour in their captivity, & returne them after seventy years correction in *Babylon*; Gods carriage towards his, is different from that towards others: *Psal. 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. If his children forsake my Law, and walke not in my judgement; if they breake my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniqui-*

ay with stripes; neverthelesse my loving kindnesse will I not utterly take from him; here God took not away loving kindnesse utterly from *Judab*, sending her into captivity, but it was utterly taken from *Israel*; if the one be whipt with rods, the other is whipt with scorpions. *Saul* he sins in offering sacrifice, 1 Sam. 13. in sparing *Agag*, 1 Sam. 15. *David* he sins in the defilement of *Bathsheba*, in the murthering of *Uriah*, 2 Sam. 11. in numbring of the people, 2 Sam. 24. *Solomon* he sins in hearkening to his wives, in falling to idolatry, yet God dealt not with *David* or *Solomon*, whose sins were greater then *Sauls*, as he did with *Saul*, thy kingdome shall not continue, saith *Samuel*, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king, and it repented God that he had set up *Saul* to be King, 1 Sam. 15. 11. & he dealt severely with him, he would not answer him in his straits, but cut him off by the *Philistims* and his own sword; so that he & his were broken in pieces, and rooted out by the wrath of God; but *David* and *Solomon* were chastised with the rods of men, 2 Sa. 7. 14. and see what followeth in the next verse, *My mercy shall not depart from him* meaning *Solomon* when he committed iniquity) I took is from *Saul*, whom I put away from before me. God proceeds otherwise with wicked men, then he doth with his children, there is much love in all their afflictions, and meer wrath in all the wickedes sufferings. *Peters* sin in denying Christ was greater then *Ananias* and *Sapphira's* in denying a portion of their goods, and almost parallell with *Judas's*, yet he hath a precious aspect from Christ, fetching penitent tears from his heart, when the others are smitten with strokes of death.

6. The instruments God uses in the execution of his judgments shall be resolute, ready and active; *Set thy face toward the siege, and thine arm shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesie.* The *Chaldeans* were resolute upon the siege, came fitted every way to it, and were active in the work: *Hab. 1. 8, 9, 10. They shall flee as the Eagle hasteth to eat; They shall gather the captivity as the sand; They shall divide every strong hold, for they shall heap up dust and take it.* When God will have any notable work done, he raiseth up instruments for it,

7. Gods power and providence, over-rules secondary agents so, that they shal execute his pleasure, and not disappoint it; God laid bands upon the Prophet, and he could turn no way till he had accomplished the days of the siege, and when the King of *Babylon* and his

his forces were come to the work, God held them to it, and executed his judgements by them : Pilate would have quit his hands of Christs death, but he was to be an instrument, together with Judas, and others, and they did what the hand and counsell of God determined to be done, *Acts* 4. 28. Moses would have declined the work of bringing out the Israelites from Ægypt, and bringing in of judgements upon the Ægyptians, but God ordered and overruled his spirit.

VER. 9, 10, 11, &c.

Take thou also unto thee the wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, & millet, and fitches, and put them in one vessell, and make thee bread thereof, according to the number of the days that thou shalt be upon thy side, thre hundred and ninety dayes shalt thou eat thereof.

10. And thy meat which thou shalt eat, shall be by weight twenty shekels a day ; from time to time shalt thou eat it.

11. Thou shalt also drink water by measure, the sixth part of an Hin : from time to time shalt thou drink.

12. And thou shalt eat it at barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that commeth out of man in their sight.

13. And the Lord said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles whither I will drive them.

14. Then said I, Ah Lord God, behold, my soule hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now, have I not eaten of that which dyeth of it self, or is torne in pieces, neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth.

15. Then he said unto me, Lo, I have given thee cowes dung for manure, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.

16. Moreover, he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staffe of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight and with care, and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment.

17. That they may want bread and water, and be astonished one with another, and consume away for their iniquity.

THe time of Jerusalems siege being typed out by the Prophet side-lying, he comes here to type out the grievous famine should be in that siege; and this he doth,

1. From the course materialls they should make their bread of, in the 9. Verf. *Wheat, barley, beans, lentiles, miller, and fitches.*

2. From the quantity they should eat, *Verf. 10, 11. they must eat and drinke by measure.*

3. From the quality of it, *Verf. 12. it should be bread baked with dung, defiled bread*; this was to type out the *Israelites* eating polluted bread among the *Gentiles*, where they were to be captives.

4. From the Prophets deprecation against eating polluted bread, *Verf. 14. Ab Lord, my soule hath not been polluted, &c.*

5. From Gods answer, yeelding to the Prophets request, in the 15. *Verfe*, giving him *cowes dung* for *man*; and then declaring his intention in the 16. and 17. *Verfes*, that he would *break the staffe of bread*, bring them to extreame want, and cause them to pine away.

Something I must open before I come to the instructions arising out of the words.

Verf. 10. *Twenty shekles a day.*

There were shekels of gold, 2 *Cbro. 3. 9.* shekels of silver, 2 *Kings 15. 20.* shekels of brasse, 1 *Sam. 17. 5.* of iron also *Verf. 7.* some of these sheke's are yet to be found amongst Antiquaries, on one side they have stamped the *homer of Manna*, which God commanded *Moses* to lay up in the Sanctuary, and in *Samaritan* letters write *Sekel Israel*, and on the other side is stamped *Aarons rod*, flourishing, with these words, *Jerusalem Kadoshab.* Because the Scripture mentions the shekel of the Sanctuary, as *Exod. 30. 13.* and *Numb. 3. 50.* The Rabbies, and many others make a difference between shekels, and say, that of the Sanctuary was holy, and of twenty *gerabs*; others were common, and of ten *gerabs*, half the weight of the other; and this opinion hath prevail'd much amongst Authors: but I find it by later Writers opposed, and especially by *Vilalpandus*, its called the shekel of the Sanctuary, not because it differed from others, but for that it was kept there to be a Standard and Measure for all the rest, that there might not be great and small shekels at the pleasure of men, and mischief accrue that way; they hold that the shekels were all of one weight, though not of one substance; and that,

Vid. Vasorum de Nummis Hebra. Pradum in Ezek. Rivet. in Exod.

Shekel is a weight from Shakal, to weigh, from whence our word scale, or scall is taken.

First, because no just reason can be given why they should differ, and so doubts be multiplied of what shekel it was meant, when

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mention is made of shekels and half shekels; as *Exod.* 30. 13. and the third part of a shekel, *Nebem.* 10. 32.

Secondly, because the shekels that are now extant in the world, are of the same weight.

Thirdly, the Scriptures make the shekels that were in common use, the same for weight with those of the Sanctuary: observe two places, and its evident, *Ezek.* 45. 9, 10, 11, 12. he blames Princes there for violence and fraud, and exhorts them to use just weights and measures, and then mentions the shekel, which shal be twenty *gerabs*; this was the shekel in common use; now see *Exod.* 30. 13. where he speaks of the shekel in the Sanctuary, and saith, there a shekel is 20 *gerabs*, and so the same with that in publike use. A *gerah* weighed sixteen Barly corns, and twenty *gerabs* came to 320 Barly corns, which made the weight of the shekel of the Sanctuary and other: some render the word *gerah* by *obolos*, for farthings; some by stivers, and was the value of two shillings, or two & four pence: for the weight, which is the thing we are here chiefly to look at, a shekel, was the same with the stater among the *Grecians* and *Romans*; and *Enschim* call's shekels, *σατρες*, and a stater was four drams, call'd *τετραδραχμον*, which was half an ounce, and so accordingly the twenty shekels weight was ten ounces; so that the loaf or weight of bread here allowed to the Prophet, day by day, was of ten ounces only; others, that follow the opinion of the common shekel, which was the fourth part of an ounce, make the weight of his meat or bread, only five ounces, for so much do twenty shekels amount unto, and this is so little, that hardly life can be maintained by it; I incline to the former opinion, and leave it to your judgement.

Verf. 11. *The sixth part of an Hin.*

From the bread he descends to the *drinke*, which was no better then fair water, and not overmuch of that, a *Hin* was a measure of liquid things, as of oyl, wine, and water, and it contain'd twelve of those measures are call'd *logs*, of which you read of in *Lev.* 14. 10. One log of oyle, which *Ainsworth* saith, is half a pint; the *Rabbies* as much as six eggs, but *Pradus* observes that the eggs in *Palestina* were greater then elsewhere, and that six of them would fill the *Rom. Sextarius*; and he clears a common error about those eggs, they are not to be taken for the eggs of fowles, which are sometimes

See *Lev.* 27.
25.
Numb. 3. 47.

Vide Ainsw.
upon *Exod.*
30. 13.

Lib. 10. *Ser.*
De Eccl.

Maimon. in.
his *Traet* of
Sacrifice, Ch.
2. §. 7.

times greater, sometimes lesser, but an Egg was a certain standing measure among the *Jews*, in the form of an Egg, and the least measure they had, six of these made a *Log*, and seventy two an *Hin*; so that the six part of an *Hin* was two *Logs*; that is, so much as twelve eggs would contain, for their measure of an egg was after the proportion of ordinary eggs, and came to no more then one pint, or six ounces, as some conceive; but a pint of water weighed, comes to sixteen ounces, which was very little for four and twenty hours; *Vires non tribuit, sed mortem tantum prohibuit*, bread and water was so little, that their hunger and thirst were rather increased then diminished thereby.

Verf. 12. *Thou shalt bake it with dung that commeth out of man in their fight.*

Poor people in many places, use mean things for firing; some burn straw, some brakes, some turfe, some thorns, some dung, but it is the dung of beasts, which being dried by the wind and Sun, burns well, and supplies the necessity of the needy; but the dung of man for firing hath scarce been heard of; this he should take, and in the embers and ashes thereof bake his miscellany bread, to set out the great scarcity of fuel, both in their siege, and in their captivity; this was a very irksome business for a Prophet, to gather the dung of men, to dry it, make fires with it, and prepare his diet with such unsavory fire, and that in their fight, not privately, this did much trouble him; but especially to eat such bread: this sets out also the great haste and hunger they should be in, they should not stay till the bread was baked in an Oven, but presently hastened their dough to the fire, though never so unwholesome.

Verf. 13. *Defiled bread.*

Because in *Lev. 19. 19.* they were forbid to sow their fields with mingled seed; it hath been conceived thence, that this was call'd defiled bread, because of the mixture of grain; *Wheat, Barley, Beans, &c.* but mingling of seeds neither made the ground nor the bread polluted; for he is not after bid to change the seeds, but the dung, it was that made it polluted bread. the baking of it in so noysome a fire; and this set out the course and polluted diet they should eat, not only when they were besieged in *Jerusalem*, but when they should be in *Babylon*.

Verf. 14. *I have not eaten of that which dyeth of it selfe, or is torne in peeces, neither came there abominable flesh in my mouth.*

Whoſoever toucheth or eateth of these was unclean, *Lev.* 11. 39. 40. 22. 8. *Deut.* 14. 21. and so for their excrements, the Lord is carefull they should not be defiled with them, *Deut.* 23. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Lev.* 5. 3. 7. 21. It doth not appeare any where in Scripture, that bread prepared thus is defiled; only here in the former Verse God calls it so, and the *Jewes* had tender, delicate stomachs, which did abhor all unclean things, and therefore they used much washing, and oft washed their hands before meat. The strength of the Prophets argument lyeth thus: Lord, I have never eaten any abominable polluting flesh, and how shall I now eat defiled bread? I have ever kept my self from what thy Law hath forbidden, and how shall I now defile my selfe with that which nature it selfe abhors?

Verf. 15. *Comes dung for mans dung.*

This was lesse terrible to nature; this relaxation was of advantage to the Prophet, not to the people; for when the sledge came, they did more horrid and unnaturall things then eat bread bak'd in *Comes* or *mans dung*, as you may read, *Lam.* 4. 10.

Verf. 16. *I will break the staffe of bread.*

The staffe of bread is a metaphoricall expression, borrowed from staves, used by those are weak, sickly, and aged; by their staves they help and support themselves: such a staffe is bread to the fraile nature of man, and man that hath it blessed unto him, finds it as a staffe to stay up his fainting spirit. This phrase imports two things:

First, the vertue and nourishment comes by bread, and hence its sayd, *To strengthen mans heart, Psal.* 104. 15.

Secondly, the bread is selfe; there may be much bread, and little vertue in it, and contrary, little bread and much vertue in it; as in the Widows meal and oyl, *1 Kings* 17. 14. But when God will break the staffe of bread, he ever takes away the one, if not the other, the plenty of bread, if not the vertue of it, *Levi.* 20. 26. *When I have broken the staffe of bread, ten women shall bake their bread in one*

one Oven, and they shall deliver you their bread again by weight, and ye shall eat and not be satisfied. The Greek for breaking the staff of bread, renders it afflicting with penury of bread, as breaking of bread, *Acts* 2. 46. notes plenty and communicating of food; so breaking the staff of bread implies want and scarcity, *Psa* 105. 16. He called for famine upon the land, and brake the whole staff of bread, so that the land could not sustain them, and *Isa* 3. 1. The Lord of Hosts doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water; God would take away the plenty and the virtue, he would not bless either unto them: hence it is said, *Hos* 4. 10. They shall eat, but not have enough, not be satisfied: *Mic* 6. 14. To drink and not be filled, to cloath themselves, and not to be warm, *Hag* 1. 6. Some would here understand by breaking the staff of bread, to be meant only a deficiency, not an insufficiency; but I conceive God would take away both their bread and the blessing of that remained, according to that in *Deut* 28. 17. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store; God would take away *Panem nutrimentum, & panis nutrimentum*, that the blessing being remov'd they might be weakened, and the bread being remov'd they might be contum'd.

The word *Makah* signifies *contabescere*, to pine away, as a man Verse 17.
ppm in a consumption, and not only so, but *foetere, fetidum fieri*, to become noysome and loathsome; and so it is used, *Psal* 38. 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt; so they should not only consume, but grow loathsome and unsavory, as it is usuall with those are almost famished.

Obser. 1. That Gods judgements upon a sinfull people are seldom single, but one succeeds in the neck of another, before the Prophet had been put upon a Siedge, and now he must expresse a famine, and mind them of eating polluted bread in another Land. In the 28. *Deut*. and 26. of *Levit*. God threatens judgement after judgement, till he hath consumed them; its long before God begins to strike, but when he once strikes, he will go on and dispatch his work, and make an end of an impenitent people; and so recompence his slacknesse to punishment with severity and succession of judgements, *Amos* 4. God had judgements, which like fish-hooks should snatch them away, cleanness of teeth, droughts, blasting, pestilence, &c. *Ezek* 14. God hath sword, famine, pestilence, and noysome

noyfome beaſts, to ſend one after another, and what one leaves the other ſhall devour: God ſmote them with the ſword in *Ireland*, and hath not the famine followed it? we are under the edge of the one, and ſhall be, I feare, under the teeth of the other.

2. That a famine upon any is a diſtreſſing judgement; if God ſend it upon *Jeruſalem*, they ſhall find it very heavy: when *David* was put to that hard choyce; 2 *Sam.* 24. he would not have the ſword or famine to come upon him or his. *Curtius* reports of *Alexander*, that warring againſt the *Bactrians*, he and his were beſieged with ſuch a famine, as they were forc'd to eat up their horſes that caried their neceſſaries: when the *Carthaginians* beſieged *Saguntus* in *Spain*, they were brought to ſuch miferies with a famine, that they made a fire in the miſt of the Market place, and firſt burnt that they had left, and could not eate, and then caſt in themſelves and Children, to put an end to their miferie; whence aroſe that ſpeech or proverb *Saguntina famis*, noting extream want: It alſo related of *Cambyses*, ſon of *Cyrus*, that ſeeking to ſubdue the revolted *Ethiopians*, his army was in ſuch a ſtraite for victuall, that they were forc'd to tythe out every tenth man, and to live upon them; and that this continued ſo long, that *Cambyses* feared himſelf, and thereupon returned: It is known what a grievous famine was at *Sanſerre* in *France*, when *Charles* the 9th beſieged it in the yeare 1573. and ſhot againſt it, in three dayes ſpace 3500. great ſhot of Ordnance, and killed not one by them, yet almoſt all the people were conſumed by the famine in the ſiege thereof, having eaten up all things living, and the leather off of Trunks and Saddles. In *Edward* the ſecond his dayes was ſuch a famine, as a Parliament was called to moderate the prices of things, ſuch was the dearth, that bread could ſcarce be gotten to ſerve the Kings own family, the famine grew ſo terrible, that horſe dog, yea, men and children were ſtolne for food, and thieves newly brought into the Goale, were torn in pieces, and eaten preſently half alive, by ſuch who had bin longer there. The Scripture tells us of as great famine as we can read of; the *Samaritan* famine was ſuch, as that like Vultures, dogs and ſwine, they fed upon carcaſſes dung it ſelf; 2 *Kings* 6. 25. the *Aſſyrians* beſieged *Samaris*, untill an Aſſes head was ſold for 80. pieces of ſilver; that is, *ſhekels*, and that came to above 8^{lb} of our money, and the fourth part of a

Kab

Lib. 6.

Speeds History
Lib. 9. c. 11.

A Lapid. in loc.
When *Hannib.*
beſieged *Caffi-*
linum, a mouſe
was ſold for
200. groats.
Val. Max. l. 7.

Kab of Doves dung for five pieces of silver; a Kab contain'd four pound and five ounces, and the fourth part was thirteen ounces, & for this they gave ten shillings and upward; some think it was the corn in the crop of the Dove which did flie abroad, and came home full, but the Text is plain, *it was the dung of Doves*, which whether they used for salt, having an acrimonious humour in it, or for food, their distresse was very great, but this of *Jerusalem* was the forest that ever was, they had course fare, the food of beasts, beans, lentiles, millet, fitches, and little of this, bread and water were measured out unto them; their bread was defiled, dressed with dung; their firing sayled, having burnt up all things combustible, Gods curse was upon what they had, he brake the staffe of bread, *Deut. 28. 53.* no strength, nourishment, came from that they had, they went 55. up and down distressed, and dyed for hunger; read the 4th of the *Lam. 4. 5. &c.* the tongues of the sucking children did cleave to the roofs of their mouth, other children asked bread, and none brake it unto them: The Scarlet men of the City embraced dung-hills, the beautifull *Nazarites* were blacker then coales, the slain with the sword were preferred before the slain with famine, the pitifull women sod their children, they were their daily meat: thus God brought down *Jerusalem*, and quickly can do any; let us acknowledge Gods mercy that we are not under such a judgement; let us be humbled for abuse of his good creatures, no more pamper the flesh with them; let us not be proud of what we have, hoord up Gods blessings, but communicate and distribute to the necessities of others, and use all to Gods honour.

3. That hunger makes course and loathsome things pleasant; bread polluted will down in a famine; bread made of that which Horses and Swine eat, of beans, lentiles, fitches, &c. and be as barley-cakes; Barley of it self is a sweet grain, but being made into cakes, it was more pleasant, and such is ill dyet in time of famine, *Prov. 27. 7.* *To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet*; the sweetest thing is bitter to the full, the bitterest is sweet unto the empty: when *Eson* was faint, then red pottage was worth a birth-right, *Gen. 25. 32.* *Artaxerxes* being put to flight, his Provisions taken away, and he had onely a few dry figs, and a little barley bread, said, *Conjunctio voluptatis habemus inexpertus fui* ? hunger is the best Cook, and the best sauce: when *Darius* drank puddle-water, and that defiled

Cicer. 5. Tuscul.

defiled with dead carcases, he said, He never drank more pleasant drink. As its with Women in their longings, any thing longed for is pleasant, not other things, what ever they be; so in famine, any thing edible is longed for, and that makes it pleasant, even an Asse head, Doves dung, polluted bread, mans flesh.

4. Note here the conformity of the punishment to their sin, they had sinned in excess, and God would take away their plenty; *Hos. 13. 6. According to their pastures so were they filled;* they had full pastures, fed largely, exalted their hearts, and thought they should never want, they forgot God in their fulnesse, and he made them to remember him in a famine; fulnesse of bread was the sin of *Sodom*, and the sin of *Jerusalem* also; God brake the staffe of bread; they sinned in defiling themselves with Idols, and offered meale and oyle, honey, flowre, for a sweet favour to their Idols; *Ezek. 16.* and now they must eat polluted bread among the *Gentiles*; they had worshipped dunghill gods, and should shortly eat dunghill bread; they had been proud of their ornaments, and those in *Scarlet* should embrace the dunghills; *Hab. 2. 8. Because thou hast spoiled many Nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoyle thee:* its spoken of the *Chaldeans*. *Pharaoh* drown'd the *Israelites* children; he and his wife drown'd in the red Sea for it: *Solomon* to please his Idolotrous Wives, divided the worship of God between God, himselfe and Idols, and God divided his Kingdome between his Son and his Servant. *Socrates* tells of *Severianus* a Bishop, that called *Ghrysofome* a kneelesse fellow, because he would not bow and crouch to good causes, one trod upon his toe, which rankled, and he was forc'd to cut off that leg, and the other, and so became kneelesse himselfe. *Charles* the ninth, who had been bloody in his life, dyed of a bloody flux, and the blood, issued out of the severall parts of his body, who in the bloody massacres had caused and suffered blood to be shed in the severall parts of his Kingdome; he used to blaspheme in his life, and died blasphemously at his death. A *Romish* zealot repin'd at the fuell burnt at the Kings return from *Spain*, and said, There was such wast of wood, as shortly there would not be a faggot left to burn heretiques; this party being at *Lack-fryers* when the downfall was, received a mark of remembrance by a peece of wood. Doctor *Goad* in his Relation of that accident.

Comment of
civill Wars of
France.

5. The afflictions and judgements befall Gods people, are not casuall, but providentiall: If the *Jews* be besieged, famished, taken, carried away into other lands, and eat polluted bread there; Gods eye hath directed, his hand hath acted, and therefore he saith, Whether shall I drive them; what *Nebuchadnezzar* and his Army did, was the work of God: so *Joseph* said of the dealing of his Brethren selling him into *Egypt*; Gen. 45. 5. *That it was God sent him thither*: It's the power and providence of God that acts in all troubles, and circumstantiates them for time, place, measure.

Observ. 1. That the Saints of old were carefull to walke according to the prescriptions of the Law: The Law forbid eating of those things dyed of themselves; what ever was torn in pieces, every abominable thing; and our Prophet was carefull to observe such and other prescriptions; it was the Saints duty to live after the directions of the Law, what God had written to them therein, they were bound to observe; and did exactly. *David* had respect unto all the commands of God, *Psal.* 119. *Moses* was faithfull in all the House of God.

2. A gracious heart will deprecate that is contrary to its sanctification, *Ah Lord, my soule hath not been polluted*; thou art the author of holinesse, and *I* have walked holily hitherto, and now must I defile my selfe? ah Lord, let it not be. The words are very patheticall; he saith not *Jehovah* in the originall, but *Jehovi*, which the servants of God have used in their most patheticall prayers and speeches: as *Abraham*, Gen. 15. 2, 8. *Deut.* 3. 24. 9. 26. *I prayed unto the Lord, saith Moses, and said, O Lord God, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance*; *Moses* spirit was exceedingly affected; and in such cases, he and others call'd God *Jehovi*, and so doth *Ezekiel* here, he was intense, in deprecating defilements: so *Peter*, *Acts* 10. when the sheet was let down with all beasts, fowls, and creeping things in it, and the voyce said, *Rise Peter, Kill and eat*, his heart was stirred, What shall I eat, that is common, unclean, and pollute my soule? not so Lord, *vers.* 14. *μηδὲν κοινόν*, in no wise Lord, what ever becomes of me, though I starve, I will not eat any thing shall defile me.

3. The godly are carefull not onely, to abstain from great sinnes, but from little ones also: it was no great matter to eat bread baked with a fire made of mans dung, and that in time of necessity, but

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even this would not, *Ezekiel* yeeld unto; there was evill in it: so *Daniel* would not defile himself with the portion of the Kings meat, *Chap. 1. 8.* *Moses* would not leave a hoof in *Egypt*; *Job* made a covenant with his eyes, not to look upon a maid, and therefore gave not sway to his minde to think upon one, *Job 31. 1.* thinking is lesse then looking, and this hee would not allow himself. *Joseph* abhorr'd the act, and *Job* the thought of uncleannesse. *Paul* would not be subject one houre unto false brethren, *Gal. 2. 5.* and he bids the *Thessalonians* to abstain from all appearance of evill, not onely evil, but the appearances of it, *Quicquid male fuerit coloratum*; this made *Paul* to blame *Peter* for yeelding to Jewish Ceremonies, when they carried a face of evill, *Gal. 2. 14.* and to say, rather then he would offend his weak brother by eating, *he would eat no flesh while the world standeth, 1 Cor. 8. 13.* The Primitive Christians would not throw a little Frankincense into the fire, nor bow before an Idoll, though their lives lay at stake upon the refusal.

4. That the Saints, through darknesse and doubts, doe stick at that which is lawfull and warrantable; God bids *Ezekiel* bake his bread with mans dung, and eat it; here was warrant sufficient for him; Gods command makes a thing holy: *Alt. 10. 13.* Kill and eat, said the voice to *Peter*; no, saith *Peter*, and why? the creatures in the sheet are common and unclean; but it was replyed, *What God hath cleansed, that call not thou unclean or common*; How came all to be clean in the sheet, when by the judgement of the Law there were creatures unclean in it? it was the command of God made all so, *Kill and eat*; *Peter* without doubting or questioning, might have killed and eaten any creature there, without polluting his spirit; and so *Ezekiel* might have eaten such bread without defilement, Gods command legitimates any thing: *Abrahams* sacrificing of his son, *Gen. 22. 2.* *Hoseas* marrying a wife of whoredome, *Hos. 1. 2.* the brother marrying with the brothers wife, carrying of the bed on the Sabbath day, *Job. 5. 11.* Where there is a word from heaven for any thing, we need not fear defiling our selves: the Saints of God stuck at things when they had a word, no marvel if Saints now stick at things, when they have no word.

Deut. 25. 5.

Vers. 15.

Note that God doth condescend to the weaknesses of his servants and mitigates what seems grievous unto them; mans dung was very irksome to the spirit of the Prophet, the Lord dispenseth, with

with his command, and gives him cowes dung for mans. The Saints are precious in Gods eye, and rather then grieve and displease them, hee will oft upon their petitioning to him, dispense with his owne will; but take it up warily, when the dispensation is in things that are not prejudiciall to his glory, his wisdom, his truth, or his justice, and here it was not; God suffered no way in mitigating the sentence, and giving cowes dung for mans, it rather magnified God, that he will yeeld to the desires of his, when he is in a way of judgement. *Joshua*, when *Israel* had sinned, and God smote them, he falls down, he weeps and laments, beseeches God in behalfe of the people, and what saith God to him? *Josh. 7. 10. Get thee up, wherefore liest thou upon thy face; I will have thee mourn no longer, I will not destroy Israel; so that in Amos 7. there is a sore judgement of Grasshoppers, that eat up all the grasse of the Land, the Prophet is grieved, and prayes, Oh Lord God, forgive I beseech thee, by whom should Jacob rise, for he is small; and v. 3. it's said, The Lord repented for this, and said, it shall not be; and so a second time, after he yeelded to the request of the Prophet; This should encourage us to sue to God in these times of distresse, without doubting, for a mitigation of our miseries, if not a removall, he is a God hearing prayer, a God that will mitigate his owne judgement, rather then exasperate the spirits of his people; Let it also lesson us to a condescension one to another; let us not bee rigid and stick to our wils, and thinke it disparagement to abate of our wils and right, and yeeld to others, when God, who is infinitely above us, can yeeld to us, and doth so daily, bearing our infirmities; remember that place, *Rem. 15. 1, 2, 3.* where the strong are bid to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves, but to please and edifie their neighbour, and what's the ground of it? Christ pleased not himself, but for our sakes he bare reproach.*

1. It's in Gods power to blast the comforts of this life; *behold, I will break the staffe of bread*; God gives bread, drinke, clothes, what ever sweetens the lives of sinfull sorry men here on earth; and when he pleases hee can take them or the blessing of them from us: What are clothes if they keep not warm? What is bread if it doe not nourish? it's the same as if you had none. God can breake the staffe of bread; so that all your comforts shall bee broken comforts, and hee can take away the staffe of bread, so that your comforts shall bee no

more. *Amos 4. 8. Two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water; but they were not satisfied: the waters quenched not their thirst, they were broken comforts: and Hos. 4. 10. They did eat, but had not enough, they were not filled and satisfied, the staff of bread was broken, and the comfort of it too short for them; but that is not all, sometimes there is no water, no bread left, Lam. 1. 11. Chap 4. 4. 5. Chap. 6. there was not a little, but none; God can take away all the comforts of this life, and leave us as naked as we came into the world; neither is it onely in his power to break the staff of naturall bread, but of the spirituall also; Behold, I will send a famine, not of bread; and a thirst, not of water: but of hearing the Word of God, and men shall wander, and not finde it, Amos 8. 11, 12.* This is the foret famine, and such a famine is in many places. Let us take heed wee provoke not God to plague us with such a famine.

2. The end of God in his judgements, is to perplex and ruine wicked impenitent sinners; God sends a famine, that they may eate and drink with care, with astonishment, and consume away in a loathsome manner. What a miserable sight is it to see a man pin'd, even to death for want of bread? many in time of plenty are fill'd with care and feare about their backs and bellies, what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and how live the next day; how much more men in the depth of a famine? see what *Isaiah* saith, *Chap. 9. 19, 20. there was a civill warre to be amongst them, famine accompanying that, and the wrath of God to consume them, as fire doth fuell, and what then? no man shall spare his brother, and he shall snatch on the right hand and be hungry, and he shall eat on the left hand, and not be satisfied; they shall eat every man the flesh off his own arm: Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh; when they could not consume one another fast enough, they would consume themselves, eat their own arms to save life, and that eating was death.*

3. It is mens iniquities which bring such consumptive judgements upon them; *they shall consume away for their iniquity: sinne is poison, and that makes languishing, it eats up the strength of a man, wears out all his comforts, and brings him to the pit: Levit. 26. vers. 31. they shall pine away in their iniquity, their flesh, their spirits, their hopes, their lives may leave them, but their iniquities will not.*

Ezekiel,



Ezekiel, Chap. 5. Ver. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And thou Son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a Barbers razor, and cause it to passe upon thy head, and upon thy beard: then take the ballances to weigh and divide the haire.

2. *Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the dayes of the siege are fulfilled; and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife; and a third part thou shalt scatter in the winde, and I will draw out a sword after them.*
3. *Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and binde them in thy skirts.*
4. *Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire: for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the House of Israel.*



His Chapter carries on the Argument of the former. *Jerusalem's* misery in that was presented to you under single types, a siege and famine; in this also under a complex type is set forth the judgements of God against *Jerusalem*; I call it a complex type, because it contains many judgements of God; its generally propounded in the first verse, particularly in the three next. The matter of this type is here, and touching it, he is commanded,

1. *To take a knife or razor, and to cut off the hair of his head and beard.*
2. *To weigh it being cut off; and*
3. *To divide it.*

Something I must open in the words, give you the sense of them, and then the observations.

Take

Take to thee a sharp knife.

חֶרֶב

In the Hebrew, it is a sword, *Cherub*, which signifies any instrument that cuts and divides, of iron or stone, in *Iosb. 5. 2. Make thee sharp knives*; Knives of flint is the originall: what knife our Prophet meant is expressed, *a Barbers razor*, Hebrew *a razor of Barbers*, such as they use when they trim men, and they are very sharp, most commodious and fit for that service. This *Razor* here sets out the will and judiciary power of God, in punishing the *Jewes* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, who in *Isai. 7. 20.* is call'd a *Razor*, and that is sharp, strong and fit for shaving.

This *Razor* must passe upon the Prophets *head* and *beard*, and take away the *hair* of both, even close to the skin.

Head.

It types out unto us *Iernsalem*, which had the regions round about subject unto it, and now the chief city of *Judah*, God would shave the head and beard of this city off.

The Citizens are resembled to hair of a mans head and beard:

1. For their multitudes, they are numberlesse, and *Iernsalem* had multitudes in it of her own, and thither was a conflux of all sorts, from most parts.

2. Hair is an ornament, *1 Pet. 3. 3.* not only to women, but also to men, their hair doth become them; *Cant. 5. 11.* and people are a great ornament to a city, a city unpeopled, is a head without hair, people are the beauty and glory of a city: *Solomon* saith, gray hairs are the beauty of old men, and gray-headed Counsellors are the beauty of cities. Some by the hair of the head, think the wise men of the city are figured out, and by the hair of the beard, are the strong men; the beard is a token of manhood.

Prov. 20. 29.

A Lapid.
Barbae *sym-*
bolum virilita-
tie.

3. Hair is a weak thing, blown this way and that way with every wind; and so it is with the people, they are weak, inconstant things; *Heb. 13. 9. They were carried about with divers and strange doctrines*; *2 Pet. 2. 2. Many follow their pernicious ways*; people are truly in this sense hair, they move forward and backward, every way, there is no steadfastnesse in them: hence they are compared to waters in the holy Writ, which are ever ebbing and flowing; to clouds carried about of winds, *Jude 12.*

By

By the hair of the beard, we may understand those in the countrey towns and villages, that were neer unto *Jerusalem*.

The shaving off this hair, points to us three things :

1. Great mourning; shaving off the hair was used in that case, *Job* 1. 20. when all the sad accidents were reported to *Job*, he rent his mantle, and shaved his head; which was a sign of great mourning: So *Ezra*, the 9th, the 3^d. when the *Jewes* had defiled themselves with strange women, he pluckt off the hair of his head and beard, and sat down astonished, see *Isa.* 15. 2. *Jer.* 48. 37.

2 Great disgrace; so when *Hannu* suspected the messengers *David* had sent unto him, he shaved off half their beards, which was a great reproach, and vindicated with the sword, 2 *Sam.* 10. When men are without hair on their heads or faces, it's a reproach to them; hence the boyes mockt the Prophet, and call'd him bald-date, 2 *King.* 2. 23.

3. Destruction; when hair is cut off it falls to the earth, and perisheth; and when people are cut off from God, they perish, God would separate them from *Jerusalem*, from his worship, from his presence, and so they should fall to the earth, be as filth, and come to nothing.

The next thing considerable, is the weighing of the hair.

Ballances are an embleme of Justice, and sets out here the great equity of God in dispensing of his judgements; he is exact in them, even to a hairs weight, his judgements are not too light or too heavie, but have their just weight and measure.

The division of the hair followes; and that notes out the diversity of their conditions; they should not all fare alike, but the judiciary providence of God would proceed, with some in one kinde, with some in another.

A third part was to bee burnt in the midst of the city. It may be questioned what city, hee being now in *Babylon*: it was the city purtrayed upon the Tile, *Chap.* 4. 1. which was *Jerusalem*. What is meant by fire is doubted; fire in Scripture, oft notes out great calamities: as in *Psal.* 66. 12. *We went through fire and water*; 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. *Think it not strange concerning the fiery triall*; and here some understand fire in a metaphoricall sense, for famine and plague, whereby a third part of the citizens died; others take it literally, and conceive hereby is represented the burning of *Jerusalem*, of which.

which you may read 2 King. 25. 9. and in the last of *Jeremiah*, and this sense *Junius* favour, because it was to bee done at the end of the siege, when his visionall siege was expired, then he was to burn the hair; and when the siege of *Jerusalem* was out, and it taken, then was it burnt with fire.

Another part was to bee smitten with a knife, that sets out those were to be cut off by the sword, either in the siege, or after it, as 2 Kin. 25. 4, 5, 6, 7. and not only those in the city, but all in the regions about it.

After this, a third third part was scattered into the wind, which notes their dispersion into severall parts, as hair before the wind is carried some one way, some another; so were these *Jewes* scattered, some into *Moab*, some into *Ammon*, some into *Egypt*; and *Johannan* carried divers thither, *Jer.* 43. but God threaten'd them with a sword, *Jer.* 42. 16. and 44. 27. and made it good when *Nebuchadnezzar* conquered *Egypt*, which is prophesied of in the 46. of *Jeremiah*, God drew out a sword, and sent it after them.

Verf. 3.

The binding up a few in his skirts, typifies the exemption and preservation of some few from the common calamities; it's a metaphorically speech, taken from Gardiners, that pick up the good fruit in their laps and skirts, and throw aside the other; this little number were the poor which *Nebuzaradan* left for Vine-dressers, and Husband-men, over whom *Gedaliah* was made Ruler, 2 King. 25. 12. 23. and those that escaped out of *Egypt* when the judgement fell there, *Jerem.* 44. 28. its said, a small number should escape, and returne to *Judah*.

Verf. 4.

Take of them againe, and cast into the fire; Of that remnant which was preserved hee must take a parcell and burne, this was to present to the world; the death of *Gedaliah*, who was left Governour of the little number remaining in *Judeah*; you have the story of his death, by *Ishmael*, in the 41. of *Jeremiah*, who conspired against him, and slew him and fourscore more. After this hee tooke those were left by *Nebuzaradan* that were under *Gedaliah*, and attempted to carry them captives into the land of *Ammon*, but *Johannan* and the Captains withstood him, recovered the people, and after carryed them into *Egypt*, and so from that treachery against *Gedaliah*, a fire went forth into all the House of *Israel*. Some refer the fire going out of this remnant preserved, to the *Jewes* returning

turning out of *Babylon*, a great part of whom were slaine by *Antiochus Epiphane*, some put it upon their destruction by *Titus*. *Gallatinus* extends it to *Hadrians* time, who slew at one time 50000. of them in *India* in the *City Bitter*, and so ruin'd the whole Nation. These opinions I leave, as having lesse truth and suitableness to the Text; then that was first mentioned.

Euseb. li. 4. hist.

Observ. 1. That wicked men are of little worth: take a whole City of them, they are of no more account with God, then a little hair of the head or beard: hair in it self is an ornament, but when it groweth burthensome, off it goes, and is rejected as a thing of nought; so inhabitants are a glory to a City, but when they become wicked, they are a burthen to it, to God, he will cut them off, and value them no more then a little hair: *Abalom* cut off his hair when it was heavie, but he prized it very high, at two hundred shekels, 2 *Sam.* 14. 26. God cut off the hair of the head of *Jerusalem*, it was very heavy, but he prized it not; wicked men, multitudes, millions of them, are not worth a hair, they are inconsiderable, worthlesse things, all the wicked of the world are but excrements in it, which must be cut off and thrown unto the dunghills; *Psal.* 9. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into bell, and all the nations that forget God.* Take the best thing of the wicked, it's of small price, some farthing master; *Prov.* 10. 20. *The heart of the wicked is of little worth*; his cloaths, his ornaments and jewels, his estate, and house and land may be of great worth, but himself, his very heart is of little worth, not accounted of in heaven. But now take the meanest thing of a godly man, it's valued, regarded, the hairs of his head are all numbred, *Matth.* 10. 30.

2. It's the priviledge of Christ to appoint whom and what instruments he please to execute his pleasure upon sinners; Take thee a sharp knife, a razor, and cause it passe upon thy head and beard; the Prophet might not take what instrument he pleaseth, but what Christ appointeth; it was he set apart *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Nebuzardan*, and the *Chaldeans*, to shave *Jerusalem*, and therefore the whole work is given to God: *Isa.* 7. 20. *The Lord shall shave with a razor that is hired by them beyond the river, by the King of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet, and it shall also consume the beard*; this is spoken of *Senacherib*, and verified also in *Nebuchadnezzar*, both these were razors in the hand of God, by which he shaved the head, the

Princes and Nobles; Counsellors were cut off by him; *The beard*, the Priests and strong men; *The feet*, the common people. It's the Lord appoints and sets instruments on work to afflict Churches and States; *Amos 3. 6. Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* there is no razor shaving in a City, but the Lord hath set it on work there, *Micah 1. 12. evil came down from the Lord to the gate of Jerusalem*; it came from above, and it came to Jerusalem; hereupon the Prophet, in *Chap. 6. 9.* said to them, *the Lords voyce cryeth to the City, and the men of wisdom shall see thy Name, bear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.*

3. When God hath been long provoked by a people, he comes with sharp and sweeping judgements amongst them, and that is set out by the razor: he had waited much upon them, they went on in their sins, but now God calls for a razor, and that should go to the quick: *Radere non est simpliciter auferre, sed sic auferre, ut precedentis status vix ulla supersint vestigia*, God would not reap them, or lop them, in those cases, the stubble and trunk are left, he would shave them, not leave a politique body or Church state: that place in *Isa. 7. 20.* holds out the truth fully, he would spare neither head, beard or feet, every condition of people, the honourable, the mean, the lowest should be shaven; he would not only strip them of their clothes, but shave them, and take away their native beauty; he would fill them with mourning, make them a scorn, cut off their limbs, and destroy their lives, there should be no City, no Temple, no King, no Priest, no Sabbath, no God left them; but hath not God shaven them in *Germany*, in *Ireland*? and is he not shaving us now?

4. That there is no standing out against God, what ever our number or strength is, his judgements are irresistible: men here are compared to hairs, his judgements to a razor; can the softest or hardest hair withstand the razor? can any one or all the hairs of the head or beard do it? no, the razor will easily passe through all, as a sicke through grasse or corn: hairs are weak things, razors sharp and strong; *Pharaoh* was the strength of *Egypt*, but God by the red Sea did shave him, and many thousands more from off the face of the earth; the great men of the world are no more to God, then hairs before the razor, he cuts off the spirit of Princes, *Psal. 76. 12.* he challengeth the briars and thorns of the earth,

Who

Who would set them against me in battell? I would goe through them, Isa. 27. 4. I would burne them together.

5. The judgements and proceedings of God with sinners, are not rash, *sine consilio*, but *summo judicio*, he weighs out the hair, and proportions suitable judgements unto those that were represented by it; the infinite wise God is exact in his proceedings: hence you have it in Scripture, that God doth weigh actions, *Psal.* 1. 2, 3. the paths of men, *Isa.* 26. 7. their spirits, *Prov.* 16. 2. he examines how they are clog'd with sin and guilt, God measured the covetousnesse of *Babylon*, which was exceeding great, and he brought answerable judgements upon her; *Jerem.* 51. 13, 14. God would send Caterpillars to eat up all her wealth. Let God deal with *Babylon* or *Sion*, he observes a proportion in his judgements, *Jer.* 46. 28. speaking of *Jacobs* seed, he tells them, *he will correct them in measure*; the afflictions of the Church seem great, and are great, yet never are they without measure; *Psal.* 80. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in a great measure.*

6. There is no escaping of Gods judgements for hard-hearted sinners; here are diversities of judgements: fire, sword, dispersion, if one did not take, then another would overtake them; if the fire did not scorch them, the sword should cut them off, if not, that they should be scattered, *1 King.* 19. 15, 16, 17. God bids *Elijah* anoint *Hazael* King of Syria, *Jehu* King of Israel, and *Elisba* Prophet in his room, and tells him there should be no escaping for sinners; if they escaped *Hazaels* sword, they should die by *Jehus*, if not by his, they should by *Elisbas*; not that he used the sword, but by his prayers, and by his prophecies: in *Jer.* 1. 10. he was set over Kingdoms, to root out, pull down, and to destroy; many escape the swords of Princes, and are smitten by the swords of Prophets; Let not sinners think to delude God, he will meet with them one way, one time or other; *Amos* 9. 1, 2, 3. God comes there in judgement, he stands upon the altar, and bids them smite the lintell of the dore, that the posts may shake; this was spoken of *Jerusalem*, not of *Dan* and *Bethel*, God would not at all appear there; and what followes? God would destroy them, there would be fleeing presently; and what saith he? *Hee that fleeth shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered,*

let them dig to hell, climb up to heaven, hide themselves in *Carmel*, in the bottome of the Sea, God will follow them, find them out, and make them smart; if enemies should carry them away, and shew favour to them, God will send a sword, and it shall slay them, *vers.* 4. See *Amos* 2. 13, 14, 15, 16. nothing will priviledge, not speed, strength, courage, bow, horse, these are good, but in time of judgement they will not secure; not a great house, though of stone, *Amos* 3. 15. not gods of gold and silver; *Isa.* 2. 20, 21. not heaps of such treasure; *Ezek.* 7. 19. *They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord:* not horns of the Altar, *1 King.* 2. 28. 30, 31. not prayer, *Jer.* 11. 14. not fasting and sacrifice, *Jer.* 14. 12.

7. That in great judgements and generall destructions, God of his infinite mercy spares some few; *Ezekiel* must take a few and bind up in his skirts, all must not be destroyed, the fire and sword devoureth many, but the disperſion preserved some, and some few are left in *Judah*; God is just, and yet when he is in the way of his judgements, he forgets not mercy: a little of the hair shall be preserved, when the rest goes to the fire, sword, and wind; when all flesh had corrupted their wayes, a generall flood was brought in; *Noah* and his family were saved; when *Sodom* was burnt with fire and brimstone, *Lot* was bound up in the skirt of God; when *Ashtaliab* slew all the seed royall, *Joash* was hid, and escaped that treachery, that butchery, *2 King.* 11. 1, 2. No storm sinks all ships; no plague, famine, war, eat up all particulars, God will have a number exempt; *Isa.* 1. 9. God left them a small remnant, a few clusters after the Vintage; when the Cities were to be laid waste, the houses unpeopled, a great forsaking to be in the midst of the land, *Isa.* 6. 11, 12: in the 13th verse it's said, *but yet in it shall be a remnant*, God would spare a number, though small, he is mercifull, hath tender bowels, remembers his covenant, his name; and therefore in his hottest wrath shewes some mercy; this made *Jeremiah* say, *Lam.* 3. 22. *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed,* he and some few more were hid from the common calamities, they met with mercy in the midst of fire and sword; this made *Habakkuk* pray, *Hab.* 3. 2. *In wrath remember mercy.*

8. That the paucity preserved in common calamities, are not
all

all precious, truly godly, here was hair bound up in the skirt, kept from fire, sword, destruction, yet some of that hair, of that number must be thrown into another fire; reprobates for the present escape as well as elect vessels, some choice ones may be cut off, and some vile ones may be kept. In the flood all were not naught that were destroyed, nor all good that were saved; there was a wicked *Cham* in the Ark, and *Lot's* daughters that escaped the fire of *Sodom* were none of the best; that fire had not purged out their lust: and those were set at liberty from the brick and clay of *Egypt*, afterward were destroyed for their unbelief, *Jud. 5.* they were patient in their bondage, preserved in the red Sea, tempted God, murmured in the wilderness, and there were destroyed of Serpents, *1 Cor. 10. 9.* they were murmurers, fornicators, idolaters, unbelievers, that God delivered from the tyranny of *Pharaoh*, and after perished by the stroke of God. In a storm Cedars and Oaks are smitten, when bushes and briars are spared, and yet after they are cut up and cast into the fire. Sinners may escape present wrath, but there is wrath to come, *Luk. 3. 7.*

9. God may take occasion from the sin of some, to bring in judgement upon all; he must take of the remnant preserved, and throw into the fire, and out of that fire went forth fire into all the House of *Israel*, *Shechem* ravisheth *Dinah*, from thence the Lord took occasion to bring the sword by *Jacob's* sons, upon the *Shechemites*, who slew their males, spoiled the city, and took their sons and daughters captives, *Gen. 34.* *David's* sin in numbering the people, and God sent in a plague amongst them for his sin, which slew 70000. of them, *2 Sam. 24.* The people were not innocent; if so, God would not have destroyed them; they were defiled with the contagion of his sin, or under the guilt of others; God may let in a judgement into a family, City, Kingdom, upon the sins of some one or few, and when it's in, it may extend to all or most in them: when one house is on fire, all the rest are in danger that are neer, and oftentimes doe suffer: *Hannu's* discourtesie to *David's* messengers, his sin against the law of nations provoked God, and cost the *Ammonites* and *Syrians* dear; for God stirred up *David's* spirit, who warred upon them, and slew many thousands of them, *2 Sam. 10.*

V E R. 5, 6.

Thus saith the Lord God, This is Jerusalem; I have set it in the midst of the Nations and Countries that are round about her.

6. *And shee hath changed my judgements into wickednesse more then the Nations, and my Statutes more then the Countries that are round about her; for they have refused my judgements and my Statutes, they have not walked in them, &c.*

IN the ensuing part of the Chapter is the explanation of the types, and in this explanation you have:

First, the subject, or head to be shaven, opened unto you, and that's *Jerusalem*, vers. 5.

Secondly, Gods dealing with *Jerusalem*, in the same verse.

Thirdly, the motives that made him proceed in such a judicall way, vers. 6, 7.

Fourthly, Threatning of judgements, answerable to the types, from the 8. verse to the end.

This is Jerusalem.

It was not *Jerusalem* literally, but represented *Jerusalem*; it was a sign of the City that was to be shaven. This head to be shaven, is here by the Lords own mouth pronounced to be *Jerusalem*, which was not onely the head City of *Judah*, but of the whole world. Things and persons that are eminent among others, are call'd the heads or chief of them, 1 *Sam.* 15. 21. they took the chief or head of the things should have been destroyed; and *Chap.* 9. 22. *Hee made them sit in the chiefest place*; and for persons, *Deut.* 1. 15. *I took the chief of the Tribes*, that is, the heads of them; *Psal.* 110. 6. *the heads over divers Countries*; and so here *Jerusalem* was the head and principall of all other Cities, built upon mount *Sion*, and had the Temple, the Prophets, the true worship and presence of God, so *Jerusalem* as the head, gave light, influence and motion to the whole body, the Law shall go forth of *Sion*, and the word of the Lord from *Jerusalem*, *Isa.* 2. 3. from thence all parts of the body had instruction and direction.

I have

I have set thee in the midst of the nations and countries round about.

These words have occasioned some to think, that *Jerusalem* was the heart and centre of the earth, lying in the midst of it; on the South was *Africa*, on the North *Scythia*, *Amenia* and *Pontus*, on the East *Asia*, and on the West *Europe*, and with these great parts of the world it was compassed about: Hence the Spirit of God also affirms it to be *in the midst of the earth*, *Psal.* 74. 12. and *Ezek.* 38. 12. And infinite wisdom appeared in it, that so the sound of Law and Gospel might disperse the better into all parts of the world. But this opinion must not be taken in a Mathematicall sense, as if it were so in the midst of the earth, as that all other parts should be equidistant from it in their extremes, as the line from the center; for so it will hardly admit of truth, some quarters of the world being of larger extent then others; *In the midst of the nations and countries*, we need not to extend to the whole world, but onely to those that were neighbouring thereunto; or if we will have an eye to all nations and countries of the earth, we must expound, *in the midst, among*, or *in*, and the sense then is safe: *I have set thee in*, or *among the nations* as head and chief: thus the phrase is used oft in Scripture: *Psal.* 101. 7. *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house*; the Hebrew is *in the midst of my house*: so *Gen.* 18. 24. *if there be fifty righteous in the midst of the city*, that is, in the City; and *Ezek.* 1. 1. *as I was among the captives*; the Hebrew word is, *in the midst of them*; so that it frequently signifies, *in* or *among*. And so in this verse we may take it: or thus, thou hast chief nations and cities about thee, very rich and noble, as *Asia minor*, *Egypt*, *Babylon*, &c. and I have set thee chief in the midst of these chief ones, thy prerogatives exceed theirs, and what ever they can pretend unto, thou canst pretend to more; are they fruitfull, rich, honourable, populous, strong? thou goest beyond them even in all these, I have set thee in the midst of them, that they may all behold thy beauty and excellencies. Heathens call'd this city famous, and chief of the *Eastern cities*, well fortified, &c. The *Psalmist* sets it out best, *Psal.* 48. and 87. where are many Eulogies of it; as, *The city of God*, *The mountain of his holiness*, *The joy of the whole earth*, *The city of the great King*; that Kings saw and marvelled at; *Founded in the mount sins*, *Loved of God in a speciall manner*, *Glorious things*

things were spoken thereof; and that which is above the rest, God was known in her palaces, not in the palaces of other Cities, and known for a refuge. Jerusalem was exalted and priviledged above all Cities and Nations, and set on an high hill, that so the truth and worship of the true God might have been held forth to all round about her; but Jerusalem was ingratefull, shee honoured not that God had so honoured her; and therefore, being set in the midst of the Nations, is brought in here, not for Jerusalem's praise, but for a reproach and aggravation of her ingratitude.

This ingratitude is illustrated in the 6th verse two wayes:

1. God gave them his judgements, and they changed them into wickednesse.
2. They did it more then the Nations and Countries about them.

Changed.

המיר

The word is from *Hemir*, and it's feminine, noting Jerusalem's act, which had caused Gods judgements to be changed; she made a great and through change; the word signifies *commutare & permutare*, to exchange one thing for another, and to do it throughly; *Jer. 2 11. My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit*; a great change they had made, in exchanging glory for improfitables.

My judgements.

The word *misphbat* notes Commands, Precepts, Lawes, Rules, Wayes of God and his worship, these had Jerusalem changed, especially the Rites and Ordinances of his worship; so the word is taken, *Psal. 81. 5. the blowing of the trumpet in the new moon was a misphbat*, a Rite, an Ordinance due to the God of Jacob.

The word Statutes is much of the same nature, noting Rules, Decrees and Ordinances about the worship of God. See *Ainsw. on Psal. 2. 7.* and Leigh in his *Critica sacra* of the word *chgek*, it's mentioned in the 119. *Psal.* 22. times, and notes the constancie of divine Decrees and Lawes, and therefore is applyed to the heavens and waters which keep their place and course unchangeably, *Psal. 148. 6.*

Into

Into wickednesse.

This is a high expression, I think not in the whole Scripture again: Ezek. 7, 11. *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickednesse*; it's far short of this you have in *Rom. 1. 23, 25.* expressions suitable to this, they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, and the truth of God into a ly: and so in *Jude, The grace of God into wantonnesse*, ver. 4. And *Ierusalem* changed Gods judgments which are his glory, his truth, his grace into wickednesse, the inventions, superstitions, ceremonies, lawes, worship, Idols of the *Gentiles* were taken in, set up, countenanced, and Gods Judgements, Statutes and worship, thrust out, laid aside.

*Finxerunt novos
cultus suo arbitrio
ac novas leges.*

This they did more then the nations and countries round about them, they dealt worse with God than *Heathens*; and wherein was that? in the refusal of him and his wayes: for, *they have refused my Judgements and my Statutes.* The Hebrew word to refuse notes not a bare refusal, but a rejecting, and that with disdain; *Hof. 4. 6.* they rejected knowledge, and loathed the means of grace; they dealt with Gods Ordinances and Worship contumeliously, *Prov. 3. 11.* The word is expressed by despising; they made no account of Gods Statutes and Judgements, and so despised and rejected them: they did neither for their worship nor their lives, regard his will. *Ierusalem* having Gods Statutes, should have so prized them, stuck to and practised them, that thereby she might have drawn the *Gentiles* round about her, to knowledge and worship of the true God, but she sinned more than the *Gentiles*, and justified them in their wickednesse; they sinned not out of ignorance and weaknesse, but wilfully, maliciously.

Observ. 1. That the Lord gives to the sign the name of the thing signified: this is *Ierusalem*, it was only a sign, and not *Ierusalem* itself; yet God was pleased to call it so; and the Scripture doth frequently speak in that manner, *Gen. 41. 26.* the seven good kine are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; they were not the yeers though so call'd, but signes of yeers. *1 Cor. 10. 4.* that rock was Christ, a sign of Christ, not Christ himself; and *Chap. 11. 24.* *This is my body*, not his flesh and blood, as Papists would have it, but a sign of it.

2. It is an honour for cities to be the head and chief of the regions

gions where they are, especially where the Covenant, Truth, and Church of God is in them; *Ierusalem* was the head, and God had made good his promise in *Deut. 28. 13. The Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail, thou shalt be above onely, and shalt not be beneath, if that thou harken unto the Commandments of the Lord thy God*; the way for Cities to be honorable, only above, and alwaies above, is to harken unto God, to cleave close to his waies, to exalt him in his Worship; but if they will go aside from his Word and Worship, God will shave them, their honor shall quickly be laid in the dust, they shall be made the tail instead of the head, *v. 43. The stranger that is within thee shall get above thee very high, and thou shalt come down very low*; and *v. 44. He shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail*; and this you may see fulfilled, *Lam. 1. 5. Her adversaries are the chief, the Babylonians had shaved Ierusalem, and brought her low, which made Ieremiah say, How dast the City sit solitary that was full of People? How is she become a Widow, that was great among the Nations, and Princess among the Provinces; how is she become tributary? vers. 1.*

3. The Lord sets his Church and people among the wicked, and that for special ends: *I have set thee in the midst of the Nations, and God had peculiar ends in it.* The Nations and Country about was full of Ignorance, Idolatry, and Profaness: God recorded his Name at *Ierusalem*, set his Worship there, and them in the midst of the Nations, that they might make known the true God, the true Religion, the true way of Worship; that they might by their holy lives win those that were without, bring them in to serve the God of *Israel*; and had the *Jews* bin conscientious of their ways, faithful and spiritual in their Worship, they might have prevailed much with the Nations to have turned from their Idols and other sins, to the living God, at least have convinced them of the evil of their own ways, and the excellency of Gods ways. Therefore *Moses* used this Argument to perswade the *Jews* to keep Gods Statutes, *Deut. 4. 6. Keep and do them, saith he, for this is your Wisdom and Understanding in the sight of the Nations which shall hear all those Statutes, and say, Surely this great Nation is a Wise and Understanding People.* Examples of Cities and Nations are convincing and perswasive Orators, if they be godly: Beacons on a hill, whose light extends far; great Cities have influence into all the Coun-

ties and Countries round about; they came from all places to *Ierusalem*, from *Sheba*, *1 Kings* 10. 1. from *Aethiopia*, *Acts* 8. ~~2.~~ from *Parthia*, *Mesopotamia*, *Lybia*, *Rome*, and many other parts, *Acts* 2. 9, 10. and what they saw and heard at *Ierusalem*, that fastned upon them. What is done in great Cities is much observed, and goes forth to the ends of the Earth; *Revel.* 17. 5. *Babylon the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.*

4. Ingratitude is a sin that provokes heaven it self, it caused God the giver, to upbraid *Ierusalem* the receiver; *I set thee in the midst of the Nations*, I made thee the head, put honor upon thee, call'd thee my City, was thy defence, glory, strength; I gave thee my Judgements and Statutes, and what hast thou done? Corrupted thy self, corrupted the Nation, changed my Judgements into wickedness, and rejected them; this troubled the Lord greatly in all ages: *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee? &c.* and notwithstanding, all that God had done for them, and was to them, yet they corrupted, bespoted themselves, dealt perversly and crookedly with God: so *Isa* 1. 2. *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have brought up children, and they have rebelled against me: Oxen and Asses were more respective of their owners. then they were of their God, and therefore God upbraids them with it.* God had done much for that people, his Law, Prophets, Temple, Worship, Miracles, choicest blessings of heaven and earth were for them, and yet they were ingrateful; therefore God calls heaven and earth to witness against them, how unreasonable they were in their carriage towards the Lord: so in *Jer.* 2. 12. he puts it higher, *Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, be horribly afraid, very desolate;* and why should there be such a change in the heavens? because Gods people had made a dreadful change on earth; God had bin a fountain of living waters unto them, fill'd them with comforts of all sorts, made them green and flourishing, and now they had forsaken him for puddle and broken Cisterns of their own: Ingratitude troubles Heaven and Earth; *Bernard* saith, Mans ingratitude troubled Christ more then his cross, nails, whippings, reproches; yea, his death: for Christ to becom man, to suffer all for man, and he to be unthankful, this

pierced him to the heart most; and when God doth much for kingdoms and cities, and they prove ingratefull, it puts God into an upbraiding way; *Isai. 5. 4.* I did so and so for my Vineyard, *Oh, what could have been done more? I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up, trod down, laid waste; it shall have briers, and no rain shall fall upon it.*

5. Those have the name and face of Gods people may become worse then Heathens: *Ierusalem* changed Gods Statutes into wickednesse, that was ill; but she did it more then the Nations, which was exceeding ill; hence you find *Ezek. 16. 46, 47, 48.* that the sins of *Ierusalem* exceeded the *Samaritans* and *Sodomites*, *Thou hast not walked after their ways; nor done after their abominations: but as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more then they in all thy ways;* their sins were inconsiderable to *Ierusalem*s, and because *Sodoms* sins being so great, notorious, as that they fetched fire from heaven, and God could not forbear them no longer, it would hardly be received that *Ierusalem*s sins were worse then *Sodoms*, the Lord swears to it, *As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom and her daughters have not done as thou and thy daughters have done,* the nations and countreys about never sinned so desperately against God, as those professed his name, and went for his people; and you have the sentence of heaven for it, *Ier. 2. 10, 11.* *Pass over the Illes of Shittim; and see, send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing; hath a nation changed their gods which are yet no gods? but my people hath changed their Glory for that which doth not profit; the turpitude of their fact is fully set out, it was such as could not be parallel'd among Heathens, inquiry was made, the report given in, that the Gentiles changed not their gods; they would not alter their lawes and worship they had from men; but the Jewes parted with their glory when they would not part with their shame, they let go their Religion, which was divine, and without any just cause, changed Gods judgements and Statutes into wickednesse, into that which neither did nor could profit, they were changelings, chopt away heaven for earth, God for Idols, and his worship for mens inventions; this made the Lord say of them, *Ier. 3. 5.* Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest. What could they do worse, then let the infinite, glorious wise, most holy and blessed God go for Idols and*

Hos. 9. 10.

Idolatrous

Idolatrous worship, when the heathens would not let their gods goe, that were of base and corruptible materials, made by the hands and art of men, that could neither see, hear, or help them? What could *Manasses* do worse then he did? 2 *Kin.* 21. 11.

V. E. R. 7, 8.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because you multiplied more then the Nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my Statutes, neither have kept my judgements, neither have done according to the judgements of the nations that are round about you;
 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold I, even I am against thee, and will execute judgements in the midst of thee; in the sight of the Nations, &c,*

THe 7th verse is of the nature of the first, and hath in it motives unto God to proceed in judgement with *Jerusalem*; First, They observed not the laws of God; 2. Not the laws of the Nations, but multiplied more then they; and thirdly, before them unto whom they should have been patterns of pietie.

Because thou hast multiplied more then the Nations.

Some Expositors referre these words to their mercies, not their sinnes; and make the sense thus; Because thou hast multiplied in number, in riches, in honour and strength, in victory, in profits, in ordinances, in all blessings, for which ye ought to have been thankfull, fruitfull and obedient unto that God who blessed you thus above the Nations; but in stead of this hast dishonoured God, grown loose, Idolatrous, &c. therefore will I deal accordingly with thee; Take it thus, and you have this note; That prosperitie rather worsens then betters a people; they had more mercies then the Nations, and more sinnes then they; as they abounded in Gods blessings, so they abounded in ingratitude. *Deut.* 32. 15. *Isurum waxed fat, and kicked, &c.* *Hos.* 13. 6.

But others referre this multiplying to their sinnes; and the sense is this; Because thou hast not satisfied thy self with a little wickednesse, but multiplied sinnes, iniquities, transgressions, and that more

more than the Heathens; that had not thy mercies, nor thy light, therefore will I judge thee; and that they multiplyed sin is evident, *Ezek. 16. 25, Thou hast built thy high places at every head of the way; thou hast opened thy feet to every one that passeth by, and hast multiplyed thy whoredomes; she sinn'd with the Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans,* vers. 26. 28, 29.

The judgements of the Nations.

The Gentiles have their judgements, their laws, rules and wayes of living and worshipping. Some understand herè the lawes of nature, what men have written in their hearts naturally, according to what you find, *Rom. 2. 14, 15.* and the *Jewes* that had the lawes of God superadded to the law of nature, did not abstaine from those sinnes the Nations did; They observ'd the Law the *Jewes* brake.

Others referre it to their laws, decrees, and practise, touching their gods, and the worship of them, they were tenacious of both, and would not alter their worship, nor exchange their gods. It was a Maxime among heathens, *Ne quid novarent in religionis forma*; and it was an Oracle of *Apollo, Eos deos rite coti qui traditi essent a majoribus*; and they thought it impious to depart from what they had received. When *Paul* came to *Athens*, they did and would worship their unknown God; *Paul* could not prevaille with them to exchange a lye for a truth; not all the miracles *Moses* did in *Egypt* prevail'd with *Pharoah* and the *Egyptians* to forsake their false gods, so that these words are a reproach to the *Jewes*, who were not so constant as the Nations to their gods.

Observ. 1. That God walks nor into the way of judgements, till men do walk out of the way of his statutes; *Because ye have not walked in my statutes, nor kept my judgements*, therefore I will do so and so by you; God's delights are in wayes and works of mercy; Judgements are his strange workes, and strange acts, *Isa. 28. 21.* he is provoked unt o them as a Bee unto stinging; it's the child's wantoness causes the father to use the rod. *David's* sin brought the sword to his own house, the plague to the people; when the wickedness of the earth was great, then the windows of heaven were open, and the floud came, *Gen. 6.*

2. When God intends judgements, he usually convinces sinners; judgements

judgements and convictions are not far asunder; God sets their finnes before them, they walked not in his statutes, they sinn'd more than the Nations, therefore he would proceed in judgement with them; he convinces them of their sinne, to make way for a farther conviction, namely, of the equity of his judgements; when the Lord shall convince a sinful people to be guilty, and that of great finnes, it stops their mouths, and proclaimes the equity of his judgements, which are ever short of the merit of mens iniquities. *Ezr. 9. 13. Our God hath punished us less than our iniquities.*

3. That Heathens are oft more true to their principles, than the people of God: The Nations kept their judgements, their gods, their worship; they would not suffer ought to be spoken against their gods. *Demetrius* and others were in a rage against *Paul* and his companions for it, *Act. 19.* They were free from many of those finnes were practis'd and countenanced among the *Jewes*, who kept neither to the true God, nor to his statutes and judgements. *Ahaz* is better pleas'd with an Altar from *Damascus*, than that the Lord had appointed, *2 King. 16.* *Solomon* that excell'd in wisdom shew'd his folly in this, that he built high places for *Chemoß* and *Molech*: and not only a particular man, but the body of the people turn'd aside from the true God. *Judg. 2. 12. They forsooke God that brought them out of Egypt, and followed the gods of the people that were round about them, they bow'd to them, and served Baal and Ashtaroth;* and *Chap. 10. 6.* it was an ordinary thing with them; *The children of Israel did evill againe in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, Ashtaroth, the gods of Syria, the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the Philistims:* They were not satisfied with one or two false gods, but fetched in the gods of the Nations round about. Hence this people are said to go a whoreing *Hof. 4. 12.* from under their god, his laws, statutes, worship, government would not suffice them, but they would out, and have strange gods, and strange lawes. *Reboboam* forsook the Law of the Lord and all *Israel* with him; Gods Law was exchanged for the lawes of men. *1. They kept the statutes of Omri, and brake the statutes of Iehovah, Mic. 6. 16.* The *Jewes* were as unconstant to their God; and in his worship, as any Nation under heaven; God upbraides them for it, *Ier. 2. 36. Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?* God had given them a good way, a way of life, and they would not abide

abide in it, but hasten into ways of sin and death; they loved to wander, Jer. 14. Hath not *England* bin weary of Gods ways, wandered to *Rome*, and other parts, to fetch in somewhat of theirs? Have we not bin upon conjunctures of Protestants and Papists, in Doctrine, Discipline, and Ceremony?

Verse 8:

In the 8. verse is laid down a dreadful threatening; *Behold, I even I am against thee*; and the denunciation of judgement runs on to the end of the Chapter, with many aggravations. Here the Lord is brought in a just and severe Judge, and the chief Author of all the judgements were to come upon them; *I, even I am, &c.* It's doubled and notes;

1. *Evidentiam*, That so they might be perswaded of it; the *Jews* thought that God would never be against *Jerusalem*; but to convince them, he tells them, *I, even I am against thee*.

2. *Certitudinem*, That whether they believed it or no, they should find it so.

3. *Vehementiam*, To set out the intensiveness of God in this thing, he was serious and real, his heart was in it, he was not words, but weight; *I, even I, &c.* That so they might be the more affected.

The Vulgar reads it, *to thee*, in stead of *against thee*; the Hebrew bears both, and the sense abides the same; *I, even I to thee*; that is, coming to thee with my judgements; I am hastning towards thee for thy ruine and destruction; and so coming to *Jerusalem*, is being against it: That phrase in *Lev. 26.24.* of *walking contrary to them, and punishing them*, is the expository of this here; God would come to them, come against them, and destroy them; and this should be not in a private way, but in the sight of the Nations; it's a sad thing to have God secretly out with one, much worse to have him an open enemy, as God professes he would be unto them all should see his dealings with them.

Judgements.

Here it's not taken as in the 6, and 7, verses, but notes wrath, vengeance, and punishment to be inflicted upon evil doers; its the same word in the Hebrew that notes laws and punishments, and both are called judgements, being from the infinite Wisdom, Counsel, and Judgement of God.

Observ.

Obfero. 1. That it's God is the great Agent in all Judgements befall Cities and Kingdoms; *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Nebuzaradan*, and many thousand fierce bloody Souldiers came against *Jerusalem*, but God was in them, acted and ordered them, they were the rod and staffe in his hand, with which he beate *Jerusalem*, the Axe with which he hewed them, the razor where with he shaved them, and might have said, it's not wee but your God is against you, he hath commanded us to come forth, to plunder your Countrey, to besiege, take and burn your City, though you yeelded not obedience to his commands to prevent the judgement, yet we must and will, to execute the judgement appointed by him; sufferers are apt to looke at the next and second causes; not at God, but Armies, plagues, famines, what ever judgements are extant, they are in Gods hand, he is the principall actor in them, *2 Chron.* 12. 7. God calls the wrath his wrath, and *Shishach* was to powre out upon *Jerusalem*; *Shishach* was the vial, God put in the wrath, and powred it out at his pleasure. *Amos* 4. 6. 10. God tells them it was he gave them cleanness of teeth, and sent the pestilence; and it's he breaks out like fire in the house of *Joseph*, Chap. 5. 6. and *Isa.* 63. 10. *he fought against them*; it was God in their enemies did it.

2. It's a dreadful thing to have God against a City, or Kingdom, *Behold, I, even I, am against you.* I that have loved you so dearly, that have done so much for you, that have bin a friend, a father, a husband, a deliverer, a counsellor, a God of salvation, even I am against you. The word, *Behold*, imports so much, where that is prefixt, usually some great, strange, and dreadful thing follows; and so here, could a greater, stranger, or more dreadful thing befall Gods people, than to have God against them?

1. All in God is against them; all his Attributes, his wisdom, holiness, mercy, justice, patience, power, &c. working for their ruine. *Ier.* 18. 11. *Behold, saith the Lord, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you:* Gods head and hand, was at work against them: and so in *Micah* 2. 3. *Behold against this family do I devise an evil*; it was ill with the family of *Jacob*, when God set his thoughts a work to devise judgements for them. The infinite, wise, and powerful God, when he is once against a people, improves his attributes for their ruin; hence you have it in the Word, that *Gods face is against the wicked*, *Psal.* 34. 16. and set

against them, *Levit. 26. 17.* and so his hand is against them, *Lam. 3. 3.*

2. All from God ; as, 1. All the creatures ; When the King himself is out with any, all his officers and servants frown ; also Angels are against a people, when God is against them ; when two States fall out they call away their Embassadors ; and God calls away his Angels, when he is wroth with a Nation, and because their Lord and Master is wronged by that Nation, they take part with him against it, and stand ready to execute his judgments upon it ; when Christ was injuriously dealt withall, *Peter* drew in his Masters behalf presently ; when God was against *Egypt*, the destroying Angel was quickly felt there. Not only Angels, but all inferior creatures act answerably unto their Lord, when he moves against a people, they do it also ; the Starres fought against *Sisera*, *Judg. 5. 20.* the Waters against *Pharoah*, *Exod. 14. 26.* the earth against *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, *Num. 16. 32.* fiery Serpents stung the *Israelits*, *Num. 21. 6.* see *Levit. 26. 22. Ezek. 34. 28. Chap. 14. 15.* Wilde beasts God would send amidst them, and he did it, *2 King. 17. 24. 25.* there were Lions, and *2 King. 2. 24.* there were Beares which did devour. *Herod* was eaten up by wormes. *Pherecydes* with vermine. *Plinie* tells that in *Spain* they were constrained to forsake their Cities, because undermin'd with Conies : one in *Thessal.* with Moles ; and in *France* many Townes were left, because annoyed with Froggs, Locusts, Mice, and Wasps ; God is the Lord of Hosts, and can quickly muster up an Army of the creatures against his enemies.

2. All Ordinances ; the Word is the favour of death, *2 Cor. 2. 16.* the Gospel is hid to them, *Chap. 4. 3.* Prayer and fasting witness against them, *Isa. 58. 5. Zach. 7. 5.* Passeeover, Circumcision, Sacrifices, Temple, Sabbath, New Moones, &c. did them no good, but encreased their woes, *Isa. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.* and *Chap. 6. 9, 10, 11.* *He*re yee indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, but perceive not : make the heart of this people fat, their eares heavy, shut their eyes, lest they should see, heare, understand, be converted and healed ; And why thus ? God was against them, he would waste their Cities, and make their Land desolate ; God was against the *Jewes*, his purpose was to root them out, and what did Christ his glorious Gospel and treasures of it profit them ? as *Ahab* said of *Micaiah*, *1 King. 22. 8.* he prophesied no good unto me ; so these prov'd no wayes good unto them.

3. God

3. Gods sets a people he is against, against it self, he divides them; *Ephraim is against Manasseh, and Manasseh against Ephraim, and both against Judah, Isa. 9. 21.* When people will divide from God, God will multiply their divisions; he can and doth mingle a perverse spirit in the midst of a people he is against, *Isa. 19. 14.* there shall be no agreement, but in the ruin one of another, *ver. 2.* *I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians, and they shall fight; Brother, Neighbour, City, Kingdom, each against another.*

4. All miseries, plagues, judgements, curses break in quickly upon that people, *Levit. 26.* When God is in march against a people, he will appoint over them, terrors, consumptions, burning agues, &c. And if these do not humble them, he will have seven more judgements for them, *ver. 18.* and after them seven more, *21.* and if they prevailed not, seven more, *24.* and seven more after those three sevens, *v. 28.* God would multiply their judgements by sevens: and they found it truth what God said, *Judg. 2. 15.* whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and they were greatly distressed; they met with variety of evils on every side; and that which is worse than all these, spirituall judgements seise upon their hearts, so that either they see not evils coming to fear and prevent them, or profit not by them being come and felt; their great distresses and gracious deliverances did them no good, their hearts were still Idolatrous, and they went a whoring after other gods, *ver. 17.* *Hos. 7. 9.* Strangers devoured Ephraims strength, and he knew it not; Gray haire were here and there, and not discern'd.

5. No refuge left when God is against a people; riches will not profit, *Prov. 11. 4.* *Zeph. 1. 18.* neither silver nor gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lords wrath, but the whole land shall be devoured; then may they say with David, *Psal. 142. 4.* Refuge failed me: Will yee flee to Cities, and Sanctuaries? *Levit. 26. 31.* *I will make your Cities waste, and bring your Sanctuaries to desolation.* Will yee flee to your own hearts? *Ezek. 22. 14.* Can thine heart endure, or hands be strong in the day that I shall deale with thee? Will yee return, weep, and pray unto God? *Deut. 1. 45.*

The evidences or discoveries of Gods being against a people are these:

1. When God is against a people, they are unspirited, their

hearts are despondent within them; *Hof. 4. 1.* God had a controversy with the land, and *Chap. 7. 11.* *Ephraim is a silly Dove, without heart*; they call to *Egypt*, they go to *Assiria*, they had no courage, but were fearfull and faint-hearted like Doves; when enemies and dangers were at hand, when *Iehu's* letter came to *Samaria*, the men of the city were exceedingly afraid, and said, *Two kings were not able to stand before him, how then shall we stand?* *2 Kin. 10. 4.* their hearts failed them, when man was in apprehension against them; what will mens hearts do when God is against them? his being with men, puts courage and life into them; *Iosh. 1. 9.* *Be strong, and of good courage, be not dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee*; and his being against them, daunts and damps all: *Isa. 19. 13.* when God came against *Egypt*, the heart of it melted, and the spirits of it fail'd in the midst thereof.

2. They are not successfull in their great and publick undertakings, *Dent. 28. 29.* *Thou shalt not prosper in thy ways*; thou shalt be only oppressed and spoyled evermore; God blasts their enterpizes: *Iehoram* comes out with a great army against *Abijah*, he had 800000. chosen and mighty men of valour, *Abijah* had only 400000. half so many, *2 Chro. 13. 3.* and what argument did he use? *v. 12.* *Behold, God is with us for a Captain* he is not with you, and you shall not prosper, and they did not, but fell in the battell, 500000. of them; a strange victory, that they should slay 1000000. more then themselves were in number, God was with the one, and against the other, therefore was the success so glorious and great to *Judah*, and so bloody and shamefull to *Israel*. When God is against a people, he works wonders to ruine them, there is a secret curse upon their counsel, *Isa. 19. 3.* *I will destroy the counsell of Egypt*, upon their goings out, and what ever they put their hands to, *Dent. 28. 19, 20.* *Moses* knew that it's Gods presence and countenance that makes things successfull; God would send an Angell with him to drive out the *Canaanites*, and to plant them in *Canaan*, but that sufficed not him, hee must have God go with him, *Exod. 33. 2. 15.*

3. He sets over them such as proves their ruine; *Lev. 26. 17.* *I wil set my face against you, and they that hate you shall raign over you*; the Greek is, shall persecute you, intimating, that when God is against a people, he gives them persecuting rulers; *Rehoboam* whipt them

them with Scorpions, *1 Kin. 12. 14.* *Ahaz* made *Judah* naked and distressed the land, *2 Chron. 28. 19. 20.* *Manasseh* fill'd *Ierusalem* with innocent blood, *2 Kin. 21. 16.* and made the people do worie then Heathens, *2 Chro. 33. 9.* all the Kings of *Israel* were naught, and many of them fore plagues unto the people, and especially *Ahab*, whom his wife *Jezabel* stirred up to do wickedly, more then any before him, *1 King. 21. 25.* When Gods face was hid from and against a people, he set such rulers over them, as proved roaring Lions, and ranging Bears, *Prov. 28. 15.* and I fear God is in controversie with the Christian world at this time, because most Princes in it are haters of their people, bringing them under, and tyrannizing over them. But if God will return in mercy, he will give his people favour, *and they shall rule over their oppressours,* *Isai. 14. 1, 2.*

4. Judgements awaken not, prevail not to reform, to return to God; *Isa. 26. 11.* *When thine hand is lift up. they will not see;* they saw in a general way, that God was angry, but not so, as to humble themselves under his mighty hand; they were rather hardened then humbled under the judgements of God: *Ierem. 2. 10.* *In vain have I smitten your children, they receive no correction;* *Isa. 1. 5.* *Why should you be stricken any more? you will revolt more and more;* God multiplied judgements, and they multiplied revolts; God tried them with plagues, famine, wars, bondage, and spent much birch about them, but they were stiff-necked, hard-hearted, judgement-proof, and daily worse and worse, and walked contrary to God, they were stubborn, and set light by his judgements; when God is against a people, his judgements are not sanctified, they work not out the filth and mud that is in kingdoms and cities, a wrong construction is made of them.

5. There is a spirit of envie and bitterneffe against those are deare to God, and stand most for his wayes and worship; they envied Gods people, *Isa. 26. 11.* they mockt his Messengers, misused his Prophets. *2 Chron. 36. 16.* there was a malignant spirit in them in times of the Gospel, when they went off from the old way of *Iewish* worship, and were formed into Gospel fellowship, there was bitterneffe of spirit against them, *Acts 8. 1.* there was a great persecution of the Church which was at *Ierusalem*, and they were all scattered abroad, except the Apostles; and quickly after,
Herod

In Matth. 17.
 A Lapid. in Ad.

Herod laid hands upon, and killed *Iames*. *Chrysost.* and *Theophyl.* tell you the reason, because he was a son of Thunder, opposed the Jews, the old National way of Worship, therefore he was *postulatus ad necem*, the Jews petitioned *Herod* to do it, and the more Christianity spread, and Churches multiplyed in Judea, the more bitter were the Jews against that way, and that was antecedent to the destruction of Jerusalem by *Titus*.

6. He makes that people base and contemptible in the eyes of others; they lose their honor and glory, they were the head whilst God was with them, but they became the tail when he was against them.

Observ. 3. That the Lord will be known by executing of Judgements, he will not smite in secret, in a Corner of the Land or City, but in the midst of them; and so, as his Judgements should come abroad, be seen and heard of the Nations: The Jews thought God like themselves, *Psal.* 50. 21. because he was silent, they felt him not a revenger, and therefore would make him a partaker in their sins, God would vindicate himself, and execute Judgement in the midst of them; the Gentiles were blind, deeming Judgements to be casual; but God would so deal with Jerusalem, inflict such punishment, as that they should see and say, they were not accidental, but from the God of heaven; so that here the equity and greatness of Judgements are held out; they sinned, and grievously, in the midst of the Nations, and are punished accordingly in the sight of the Nations; This was an addition to the Jews misery, that their enemies should be witnesses of what they suffered. *Terul.* tells of *Claudius Hermianus*, who persecuted the Christians bitterly, and the rather, because his wife was turned to that Sect, as he called it, he being smitten with the Just hand of God, said, Keep it secret, lest the Christians rejoyce.

Ad Sapul. c. 3.

Nemo sciat ne gaudeant Christiani.

VERSE 9, 10.

*And I will do in thee that which I have not done; and wherunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations.
10. Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers, and I will execute judgements in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.*

THese verses contain further aggravations of *Ierusalem's* miseries: the 9. verse tells you they should be such the world had not seen, nor should see; the 10. verse specifics some particulars.

The 9. verse extends to the time past, and to the time future, and falls into examination, whether true in either part.

First, *I will do in thee that which I have not done*; had not God dealt severely with the old world, with *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, with the *Egyptians* whom he drowned? Yes, he had; but their sins being not so grievous as the *Jews*, their judgements were not so great, the forest was that of *Sodom*, and *Lam. 4. 6. The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater then the punishment of the sin of Sodom*; that was overthrown in a moment, it was a sharp, but short punishment, *Ierusalem* had severity and length of time, therefore its added, *v. 9. That they be slain with the sword, are better then they are slain with hunger*, their Judgement is easie.

But was not the siege of *Samaria* as sad a Judgement as this executed against *Ierusalem*? *2 King. 6. 28, 29.* there the women ate their own children, and suffered great distress through famine.

Ans. The women ate their children, but it came not to that extremity, as that the fathers should eat their sons, and the sons the fathers, as here it was: And

Secondly, that was not taken as *Ierusalem* was, and burnt, many put to the sword, many carried into captivity.

This part of the verse you see cleared; that respects the time to come is more difficult: *I will not do any more the like.* Did God do his utmost now? did he not do as much, or more against *Ierusalem* and its inhabitants, for putting Christ to death? When *Titus* besieged *Ierusalem*, did they not eat their children, one another, dy with famine? did not the plague and sword destroy? ran not their blood down the streets, out at the gates, and affected their very

very enemies? came not the wrath of God upon them to the utmost? 1 *Thes.* 2. 16. and said not the Lord Christ, *Matth.* 24. 21. that there should be at that time *such tribulation as was not from the beginning of the world, nor ever should be*; how then is it truth in our Prophet, that God saith, *I will not do any more the like*?

T^o

1. The Hebrew word for *no more* doth not always signifie perpetuity, but some time, a longe tract of time; or a considerable space, 2 *King.* 6. 23. the heads of *Syria* came *no more* into the land of *Israel*, that was, for a certaine time they did not, but yet afterward they came again, as appears in the next verse: so *Isa.* 2. 4. *Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*; it's spoken of Christs time; and for some yeers, there was quietness in the world, but after the Gospel spread, wars were learned and practised again: one place more in *Gen.* 46. 29. *Ioseph* fell on his fathers neck, and wept on it a good while, it's the same word; so then God would not do so any more, that is, for a good while, a long season, for that age and generation.

2. We do not find that ever there was such a hand of God upon a people, that the fathers should eat their sons in an open visible way, and the sons the fathers, as there it was. The Scripture mentions not the like again, scarcely any story in the world; and in this particular it may exceed all that ever God had done, or would do. God never would do *Chemobu* like that again. No such president should be after it; and so that they should be scattered into all parts of the world.

3. Some Interpreters conceive the words, *that which I have not done, and whereunto I will do no more the like*, to be an usual phrase amongst the Hebrews to set out the greatness of the judgement.

Because of all thine abominations.

מאבן

The Hebrew word signifies a hateful thing, such as is loathsome and dangerous: The *Septuagint* do frequently render it by *Βδελύγμα*, which is a thing so detestable, as *Propter fœditatem nemo non adversatur*, a wickednes of which *ne fari liceat*, it's so offensive, unfavory: the word *עב* *abominari*, signifies such a thing as a man *omibus sensibus* abboeth, that a man indures not patiently, to heare, see, or speak of; it points out notorious sins, of all kinds, I shall name some unto you: the counterfeting of the sexes, men
by

by wearing the womens, and women the mens Apparel; this was an abomination unto the Lord, *Deut.* 22. 5. Incestuous Mariages, Adulteries, Sodomy, Buggery, *Lev.* 18. 26, 27. he had mentioned the sins, and then calls them abominations, falsehood in weights and measures, *Deut.* 25. 14, 15, 16. Idolatry, as *1 Pet.* 4. 3. Abominable Idolatries, and so odious are Idols, that they are call'd abominations, *2 Chron.* 15. 8. *Asa* put away the abominable Idols; the Hebrew is, abominations. Idols are meer abominations, *Milchom* was the abomination of the *Amorites*, *Chemosh* of *Moab*, and *Molech* of *Ammon*, *1 King.* 11. 5, 7. Idols make nations abominations to God and Man, they are a shame, *Hof.* 9. 10. an accursed thing, *Deut.* 7. 26. such abominations as these mentioned, and others, they were guilty of.

Verf. 10. *Therefore the Fathers shall eat the Sons in the midst of &c.*

Here the dreadfulnes of Gods judgements are in part expressed; fathers should eat their sons, and sons their fathers; not as *Pradus* would have it, they eat the food of one another, that should have preserved life, and so became the death of each other. It was a real eating, *Lam.* 4. 10. *The pitiful women have soden their own children, they were their meat*, and may it be thought their hungry husbands shared not with them in those Viands? What was threatned, was made good; and certainly the fathers did eat their own children at that time, and the children the parents. If tender mothers did this, much more fathers, *Qui solent esse seniores in filios*; so extreme was the famine, that it made them do acts against piety, honesty, humanity, light of nature; necessity breaks all bands; in the *Samaritan* famine they did eat their children; *2 Kings* 6. 29. you may read a lamentable discourse, of a mother killing and eating her child for hunger, in *Ioseph.* 1. 7. *bel. Judaic.* c. 8. when *Titus* besieged *Ierusalem*, it was *Mary* the daughter of *Eleazar* a noble woman, she boyled one part, and kept the other; some smelling flesh, asked, What was done? she tels the fact, and *attoniti recesserunt*, they went away amazed. In *Honorius* time there was such a famine at *Rome*, that there was a publike cry; *Pone premium humana carnis*, set the price of mans flesh.

Observ. 1. When God is become an enemy to a people, he doth unheard of things, such severity is in his judgements as is not or-

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dinary;

inary; their abominations had made the Lord against them; and therefore would do as he had not done: send a sharper sword and famine then ever, *Lev. 26. 30, 31, 32. My soul shall abhor you, and I will make your Cities waste, bring your Sanctuaries and Land into desolation, and your Enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished at it;* they shall Wonder at the severity of God towards his people, and not only inmates, but forrainers shall wonder: *Jer. 19. 3. Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which Whosoever heareth, his ear shall tingle: and Jer. 22. 8, 9. Nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great City? Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord their God, &c.* Gods judgements would be so hard and heavie, that the Nations should marvel, and be unsatisfied at them, till they should hear how they had dealt with God. Hath not God of late bin against *Germany*, and executed extraordinary judgements there, such as cause astonishment? Have not mens eys bin twisted out with cords, their skins fled off alive, their faces plain'd with cheils, their noses and ears cut off to make hatbands, their mouths gag'd, piss, and filthy liquids powred down; Have not men bin hung up by the hands in the smoke? put into hot ovens, roasted with straw fires? have not Divines bin cut in pieces, and their limbs thrown to dogs? have not many sed and liv'd upon the flesh of dead men and women, eaten their own children, kill'd one another for relief against hunger; strange judgments God brought upon *Germany*, and as strange upon *Ireland*, hath it not bin the land of Gods ire, and the people the generation of his wrath; and felt more for so short a time, then *Germany* or other Nations? have not women with child bin ravished, then ript open, the bed of conception viewed, the child taken out, and thrown into the fire? Have not the Protestant Ministers bin stript, bound to trees or posts, their wives and daughters ravished before their faces, then hang'd up before them so ravished, cut down half dead, quartered and dismembred? have not many bin turn'd out naked, forc'd into waters, famish'd to death under hedges; some have bin mortally wounded, their bellies ript, bowels let out, and left upon dunghils, that they might not be soon out of their misery.

Lament, of
Germany.

VERS. II.

Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, surely, because thou hast defiled my Sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee, neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

IN this verse are two farther aggravations of *Ierusalems* judgments, and the cause of them:

The first aggravation is the inevitableness of them; *surely I will diminish thee, and that confirmed by an oath, as I live, saith the Lord, I will do it.*

The second is the disposition of God punishing them, and that is dreadful, *he will neither spare nor pity them*; and then the cause is, their defilement of his *Sanctuary with their detestable things and abominations.*

As I live.

It's the form of an oath, and is much used in the old Testament, as in *Zeph. 2. 9. Jer. 46. 18. 22. 24. Isai. 49. 18. Deut. 32. 40. Numb. 14. 21. 28.* but it's more in our Prophet, then in all the Scripture besides, fourteen times I find it; men are hardly perswaded to believe God in his way of judgements, and therefore being in that way in this Prophecie, he wears oft: You have this oath, *Chap. 14. 16, 18. 16. 48. 17. 18. 18. 3. 20. 3. 31. 33. 33. 11, 27. 34. 8. 35. 6, 11.* It's a weighty oath, and imports that which follows is not comminatory, but absolute, without evasion, without revocation; as sure as I live, and am God, it shall be done: *Psalms. 110. 4. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent*: a thing is ratified, and cannot be altered when it's confirmed by an oath, which is an immutable thing; *Hebr. 6. Let me not live*; let me not be God, if I do not diminish you, but be an Idol god, without sense, understanding, or life: the signe of an oath, anciendy, was the lifting up the hand to heaven; and this is given to God when he swears; also *Deut. 32. 40. I lift up mine hand to heaven, and say; I live for ever.* This way of swearing hath lately bin renewed at our taking the Covenant, and is to be wished that it may be used when there is just occasion of swearing, rather

then laying the hand upon a book, and kissing it afterwards, such a way of taking an oath the Scripture holds not out ; and the lawfulness thereof is questioned by many.

Thou hast defiled my Sanctuary.

Schindl.

VVeemr.

Lun:
Melden.

The word *Mikdash* notes sometimes a holy place for Refuge, and refers to God himself; *Isa. 8. 14. He shall be for a Sanctuary*; here it notes the Temple, the place of Gods Worship, from *Kadash* to separate and consecrate to divine use; the Sanctuary or Temple was consecrated, *ad doctrinam, ad precationem, & ad cultum divinum*, it was only for holy uses; some divide the Temple into the Porch, Palace, and Place of the Oracle, others into the Court of *Israel*, the Court of the Priests, and the Court of God, where the Ark and Cherubims were, and this they make the Sanctuary or Place of Holiness: for *Mikdash* is my Holiness, as well as my Sanctuary, there the glory of God appeared between the Cherubims, and this place they desired.

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A.

I shall speak a little of the holiness of places, because there is an opinion in the world, that some places are holy, and that duties done in them, are better then done else-where. It was the saying of a great Prelat, That God heard prayer, *Non quia precatur, sed quia ibi*, because the prayers were in such a place.

Two wayes places become holy:

First, By Divine Presence.

Secondly, By Divine Institution.

For the first, when God did in a visible extraordinary way manifest himself and his glory in any place, this made it holy, as *Matth. 17.* when Christ was Transfigured in the Mount, and excellent glory appeared; this made the place holy, and the Apostle call'd it, *The holy Mount*; *2 Pet. 1. 18.* So Gods appearing to *Moses* in the Bush, *Exod. 3. 5.* made that place holy; such appearances of God are not now.

The second way is, By Institution and Appointment from God; when the Lord doth Depute and Consecrate places to holy uses, then are they holy, as the Temple was; God appointed the place, the Building of the Temple, the Dedication and Consecration thereof; its only God can make any thing holy, none but he that made the creature, can lift it up to a higher condition then 'twas set in

in at first ; No man can make persons, things, times, places holy, besides the Lord. Now the Temple was by the Institution of God so sanctified, that it was a Type of Christ, a part of Worship, a powerful means of Grace, giving acceptation to the persons, and all the duties of Worship there done ; so that it was a sin for them to worship else-where, or to divert the Temple to any other use ; We have no extraordinary appearance of God to make places holy, nor any consecrated by Divine Institution to type out Christ, or any spiritual thing to be a part of Worship, a means of Grace, making the Worshipers and Worship more acceptable ; and therefore I conceive we have no place holy ; it was not the Temple, but the Synagogues that resembled our publike places of Worship, and they were not holy ; *Mat. 10. 17. They scourged in their Synagogues ;* and that was no holy act ; it's the judgment of learned ones, that *Paul* A Lapid. Brugenf. had his five whippings, of which he speaks in *2 Cor. 11. 24.* in the Synagogues ; they had the Word preached in them, *Joh. 18. 20. Att. 15. 21.* as it is in these publike places, yet that did not make them holy, and privileged them from common Acts of Justice ; the holiness of places under the Law was Ceremonial, and Christ hath put an end to such holiness ; the difference of places he hath taken away, and no one is more holy than others. *Ioh. 4. 21. The hour is coming,* saith Christ to the woman, *when you shall neither in this Mountain, nor at Jerusalem, worship the Father ;* it's true, now there is holiness in these places, the men and their services are more accepted here than any where else ; but the hour is at hand, that all such respects shall be taken away, and all places made alike, and you and your services shall be as acceptable in every place of the World, as at *Jerusalem.* Hence is it that *Paul* puts men upon praying every where, *1 Tim. 2. 8.* Many think their prayers better in such a meeting-place as this, than in their Closets, than in the Fields ; but they are deceived, places now add no efficacy or acceptation to mens prayers ; it's rather Prayer, Ordinances, and so the Spiritual Presence of God in them, that makes places holy ; and this is the Argument that some stick upon ; but upon examination, this will not make the publike place of meeting more holy than others ; for *Mat. 18. 20.* it's said, *Where two or three are gathered, &c. be it in a ship, a private house, a Field, if gathered together in his Name, he is in the midst of them,* he is there not for the Place, but the peoples

peoples sake; yet no man judicious accounts all places holy where spiritual duties are doing, or after they are done; and why public-like places of worship should be so accounted of in time of worship or after, is not discernable to a religious and judicious eye; of old the Altar sanctified the gift, it's not so now.

Hast defiled.

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In the Vulgar it's *violasti*, hast violated, wronged; but the Hebrew word notes more, it's *impurare, visiare*; and it's the same word with that sets out the defilement of *Dinah*, Gen. 34. 5. *Visiavit Dinam*; a woman may be wronged, and not be defiled; the Sanctuary was defiled, polluted, prophaned. Sometimes you read of the Lands being defiled, as *Num.* 35. 34. Sometimes of the Priesthood, *Neh.* 13. 29. Sometimes of the Lords holy Name being defiled, *Ezek.* 43. 7. And here of his Sanctuary: We must enquire what it is that defiles the same.

1. Sacrificing other where then God commanded: *Lev.* 17. 4, 5. If an Ox, Lamb, or Goat were kill'd in the Camp, or out of it, and not brought to the dore of the Tabernacle to offer, it was accounted of God blood-shed; they would offer in the fields, and not where God appointed; and this was a defilement, and as great as shedding of blood.

2. When they brought things or persons prohibited; as

1. Unwarrantable Sacrifices, any thing corrupt, and not according to rule, *Mal.* 1. 7, 8. *Ye offer polluted bread upon mine Altar*; it was not unleavened, of fine flower and oyl, according to prescription, *Lev.* 4. 8. it was of Ry, Barley, or coarse Wheat; and this bread, this *Mincha*, polluted Gods Altar; and so when they offered the blind, sicke, and lame for sacrifice, they were corrupt things, *v.* 14. and defiled the Altar and Temple of the Lord.

2. Idols: God would not have any Idol come in his house; *2 Cor.* 6. 16. *What agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* God and *Dagon* cannot dwell in one house; this was the quarrel here, *Ier.* 7. 30. *They have set their abominations in the house which is called by my Name, to pollute it.* The same words you have again in *Ier.* 32. 34. and you shall finde there were strange Altars set up in Gods house; *Ahaz* brought in the Altar of *Damascus*, *2 King.* 16. 10. &c And there were the Altars of *Manasseh* in the Court of
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the Lords house, 2 King. 23. 12. And the high places on the right hand of the mount of corruption, ver. 13. they did defile also, as the carcases mention'd in Ezek. 43. 9 which were the carcases of *Manasseh* and *Amon*, buried in the Kings garden close by the wall *Mend.* of the Temple.

2. When persons were brought in legally unclean; Ezek. 44. 7. *Ye have brought into my Sanctuary, strangers uncircumcised in heart, and in flesh, to pollute it.*

With all thy detestable things.

Shikkutzim, The word notes not offensive things simply, but so offensive as to offend the senses and the minde, and so to offend them, as it causeth an abhorring with execration; and such things are Images and Idols; 2 King. 23. 24. those had familiar spirits, the Wisards, the Images, the Idolls, and all the abominations: The word is *Shikkutzim*, all the detestable and execrable things did *Iosiah* put away; the Spirit of God speaks of them with detestation; וַיִּבְרָא
Ier. 11. 13. *Ye have set up Altars to that shamefull thing, even Baal*; Act. 15. 20. *Pollution of Idols*: dunghill or Jaketic gods, so ἀλυσγμάτων.
the word *Gillulim* signifies: *Eze.* 22. 3. They are terror to them that worship them: 1 King. 15. 13. *Maachab made an Idol*; a thing to terrifie the word is; anst *Psf.* 135. 15. *The Idols of the Nations*, it's גִּלּוּלִים
the grief, torment of the Nations. These names expresse the detestation of God against Idols, and should quicken us to the detestation of them; according to that in *Deut.* 7. 26. *Thou shalt utterly detest, or utterly abhor an Idol, or any part of it: the Original is, In detesting thou shalt detest, and in abhorring thou shalt abhor*; noting the great detestation and abhorrency should be in Gods people to Idolatry; for they defile mens Consciences, Gods worship and Sanctuary; therefore the *Septuagint* renders the word *abominations* or *detestations*, in *Ier.* 22. 34. μωμεματα. *pollutions.*

Therefore will I also diminish thee.

The Hebrew word is וַיִּבְרָא which the Vulgar renders, *confringere*, I will break thee; and then the sense runs thus: My purpose was to have preserv'd the Temple safe from all violation, if so be you had kept it unpolluted; but now seeing you have defiled it with your detestable things, I must and will break it down, as being no better then

than a common profane house. It signifies also to shave, as in *Ier.* 48. 37. Every Beard shall be clipt or shaven; the *Nazarites* were holy to the Lord, and if by the sudden death of any they were defiled, their cleansing was by shaving of their heads *Num.* 6. 9. So also was the Leper to be cleansed by shaving off his hair, *Lev.* 13. 33. 14. 8. And so here they were defiled, and God would cleanse them by shaving; and so it corresponds with the razor men trimmed in the first verse, and both these senses fall in with the word *diminish*, which the Hebrew word also denotes, *diminuere detrahendo*, and so is contrary to *Asaph*, which is to add to a thing; God would not add any more mercies, but take away their mercies, and diminish them, they had diminished his honor, he would diminish their comforts; they had stain'd his glory, and he would take away their glory, the Temple and City. Some render it *succidam*, I will cut down, God would deal with *Ierusalem*, as an Husbandman doth with a barren or rotten tree.

Neither shall mine eye spare.

This kind of expression is much used in this Prophecie, more seldom in others. The ey is the Index of the mind, the disposition whereof is seen, discern'd there as in a Looking-Glasse; Anger, Joy, Love, Grief, are Inmates, yet visible in the ey, that is the Casement they look out at; the hidden things of the heart are revealed by the ey; pity, sparing, compassion, are affections of the heart and mind, and God speaking after the manner of men, saith, *Mine ey shall not spare*, as it is in *Isa.* 13. 18. *Their ey shall not spare children*, there should be no signe of pitie or remorse in them; sparing is given to the ey as the sign of it. From the ey is intelligence given of mercy or severity within; you shall not have the least hint of mercy from mine ey, but evidence of wrath only; and whereas others were wont to be affected with the miseries they behold, their ey affects their heart; *Lam.* 3. 51. I will not be at all affected with their miseries, let a great Army sit down before them, let Famine, Plague, Sword devour, let all mischiefs be upon them, mine ey shall not affect mine heart, I will not repent.

I will not have any pity.

What could have bin said more dreadful? The Hebrew Word

which signifies to be of a prone, pitiful affection towards any, though they deserve ill, *Isa. 2. 18.* Gods people had sinned greatly, were under sore judgements, deserved utter destruction; but let them fast, pray, and turn, then will the Lord pity them, though they deserve no mercy, yet will he shew them mercy; So in *2 Chron. 36. 15.* they were exceeding ill, yet God had compassion on them; it's the same word, and hath a contrary signification to *hup* which is, to destroy without mercy; and so the word in this place, when it hath *ay* joyn'd unto it, signifieth as much, as I will not have pity, that is, I will destroy without mercy, *1 Sam. 15. 3. Smite Amaleck, utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not,* that is, have no pity on them, and when God ceaseth to pity a people, it's sad, then no redemption for them, *Isa. 63. 9.* God will deliver them into the hands of their enemies, *Zach. 11. 6.* he will harden others against them; when God pities not, yet if men will, it's some comfort, but men shall not do it, *Ier. 21. 7.* When in *Nebuchadnezzars* hands he shall not spare, pity, or shew mercy, when they should fall down, beg for their lives at the hands of *Babylonians*, they should find no mercy, only bitter words, and bloody deeds: in *Amos 1. 11.* it's said, *Edom cast off all pity, and his anger did tear;* and so God, he cast off all pity, and destruction followed; *Ier. 13. 14. I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, I will not pity, spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them;* and you may see this fulfill'd in the *Lamentations*, Chap. 2. 2. *The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied:* as a wild beast doth his prey, as a Sea doth ships, God left not one, no pity at all; see *v. 17. 21.*

Observ. 1. That sin defiles the holy things of God; they defiled not only themselves, but the Sanctuary, and worship of God in it, the land of *Canaan* was holy, and sin defiled that, *Ier. 16. 38.* the Temple was holy, and sin defiled that, *Ezek. 23. 38.* the Altar was holy, and sin polluted that, *Mat. 1. 7.* the Sabbaths were holy, and sin profaned them, *Neh. 13. 17.* the Priesthood and Covenant was holy, and sin defiled them, *Neh. 13. 29.* Gods Name is holy, *Ezek. 20. 39.* sin pollutes that.

2. That defilement of Gods worship brings certain and severe judgements; they had defiled his Sanctuary with Idols superstitions, polluted bread, blind, lame, corrupt sacrifice, by suffering un-

clean and uncircumcised persons to come there, and the Prophet brings in the Lord, swearing, *As I live, saith the Lord, surely, because thou hast done so, I will therefore diminish thee*; here is the certainty of judgement: *neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity*; here is the severity of it: Gods Worship, and the Ordinances of it, are his Name, *Mal. 1. 11, 12. Exod. 20. 24.* in all places where I record my Name, that is, where God puts his Worship, *1 Kin. 14. 21. Jerusalem* is the City that God chused out of all Tribes to put his Name in, *1 Kings 8. 29. My Name shall be there*; Hence, saith David, *Psalm. 76. 1. In Judah is God known; his Name is great, in Israel*: the Gentiles knew not God, they had not his Name amongst them, nothing of his Worship, no true prayer, and that is his Name, *Gen. 4. 26.* not the seals of the Covenant, *Mat. 28. 19.* not the censures of the Church, *1 Cor. 4. 5.* and these are his Name. Now Gods Name is very precious, and the profaning of it is forbidden in a special manner; *Lev. 22. 31, 32. Ye shall keep my Commandments and do them, I am Jehovah; and ye shall not profane my holy Name*; when they presumptuously break any command of God, say the Rabbies, then they profane Gods Name: it's the greatest presumption and violation of Gods commands, to corrupt his Worship, to mingle our inventions with it; the spirit and the strength of the second Command, is against all invented Worship and Idolatry, which is a hating of God, and provokes to jealousy and wrath more then other sins, *Ezek. 23. 37, 38.* they had sined in murder and adultery, Idolatry, but what went nearest to the heart of God? Even the corrupting of his Worship, and that is set out with a special Emphasis, *This they have done unto me*, they have defiled my Sanctuary: To defile it with blood is bad, but with false worship, with Idols, and superstitions, is abominable: What makes God reject a people, and count them the generation of his wrath? *Ier. 7. 29, 30.* they set their abominations in the house called by my Name, and pollute it: read the 8th of *Ezekiel*, and see the conclusion, *Therefore will I also deal in fury, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.*

VER. 12.

A third part of thee shall dy With the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

Here's an explication of the Type in the first and second verses, with a farther aggravation of *Jerusalems* misery, from the variety of punishments:

1. Pestilence.
2. Famine.
3. Sword.
4. Dispersion. Four fore judgements.

Pestilence.

It's from a word that signifies to speak, and speak out, the Pestilence is a speaking thing, it proclaims the wrath of God amongst a people, *Drus.* fetches it from the same root, but in *Piel*: which is to decree; shewing that the Pestilence is a thing decreed in heaven, not casual. *Kirker* thinks it's called *dever*, because it keeps order, and spares neither great nor small; the Hebrew Root signifies to destroy, to cut off, and hence may the Plague or Pestilence have it's name. The *Septuagint* render it θάνατος, death, for ordinarily its death: and it's exprest by death, *Rev.* 6. 8. he sat on the pale horse, killed with sword, hunger, death, and beasts of the earth; it refers to *Ezek.* 14. 21. where the Pestilence is mentioned. Pestilence may be from a word signifies to spread, spoil, rush upon, for it doth so, *2 Sam.* 24. 15. 70000. slain in three daies; and Plague אֶדְנָן from אָדָן, to smite, to wound, for it smites suddenly, and wounds mortally; hence it is in *Numb.* 14. 12. *I will smite them with the Pestilence*, this judgement is very grievous; *Psal.* 91. 3. it's called *the noisome Pestilence*, because its infectious, contagious; and therefore the *French* read it, *de la Peste dangereuse*, from the dangerous Pestilence it doth endanger those that come neer it: and *Musc.* hath it, *a peste omnium pessima*, and others, the woful Pestilence; it brings a

multitude of woes with it to any place or person it comes unto, it's a messenger of woful fears, sorrows, distractions, terrors, and death it self.

With famine.

Of this fore judgement hath bin spoken in the fourth Chapter, *דב* is *exardere fame*; and the famine here is such an one as burns, withers, dries up a man; when the *calor nativus* hath nothing able to feed upon, it consumes the *humidum radicale*, and man quickly perisheth. The Scripture speaks of a three yeers famine, 2 *Sam.* 21. 1. a seven yeers famine, *Gen.* 45. 6. what numbers perished then? when famines are mighty, *Luke* 15. 14. terrible, *Lam.* 5. 10. pre-
vailing, 2 *King.* 25. 3. and destroy not only the branches, but the root, *Isa.* 14. 13.

By the sword round about thee.

Charab signifies to dry up, to lay wast, to destroy; whence *Chereb* a sword is derived, for it draws out the blood, dries up the body, laies wast and destroys, *Deut.* 32. 42. It's said to eat flesh, to drink and be filled with blood; *Isa.* 34. 6. Here it's put for wars, the wars of the Babylonians against *Ierusalem*, which are called, *The sword of the King of Babylon*, *Ezek.* 21. 19. 32. 11. What a judgement the sword of war is, we begin to know and feel; it dries up the blood of kingdoms, it makes them wildernesses, and destroys round about; hence the sword is said to be hurtful, *Psal.* 144. 10. powerful, *Iob* 5. 20. oppressive, *Ier.* 46. 16. bereaving, *Lam.* 1. 20. to reach to the Soul, *Ier.* 4. 10. to devour from one end of the land to the other, so that no flesh shall have peace. *Ier.* 12. 12.

I will scatter a third part into all the winds.

It's such a scattering as is of dust or chaffe before the winds, a fanning of them; God would bring a wind out of the North should fan them, as corn is fan'd, and scatter them abroad, *Ier.* 4. 12. 13. *I will fan them with a fan*, *Ier.* 15. 7. It's the same word is here, and notes a great fanning, scattering of them; and complaint is made of such scattering, *Pf.* 44. 12. *Thou hast scattered us among all the Heathens*, that was, into the several winds and countries round about; and *Zac.* 7. 14. *I scattered them with a Whirl-wind amongst all*

all the Nations whom they knew not : this was a heave judgement, to be removed from their own Country, friends to be scatter'd several ways, to be with them, whose language and manners they knew not, that were cruel, barbarous, haters of God, his Worship, people, to be servants and slaves to them, this was a judgement sorer then pestilence, famine, sword, and they had better have bin cut off in their own land, or in their journey to those places, neither were they in safety there, for God would draw out a sword after them, they should be captives, undergo great hardship, and be daily in jeopardy of their lives. The sword should pursue them, as the phrase is, *Jer. 48.* 2. these judgements were contrary to the blessing of plenty, safety, and peace, promised in *Lev. 26.* 4, 5, 6.

VER. 13.

Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted : and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal, When I have accomplished my fury in them.

IN this Verse two ends of divine judgements are held forth :

1. The satisfaction of his own Justice, when judgements are fully executed, he will be comforted.
2. The conviction of his adversaries, *They shall know that I the Lord have spoken.*

Then shall mine anger be accomplished.

Here is mention of anger and fury, which you oft find given to God. But neither these nor other passions are in God, he is not carried by affections as men are, they are neither materially nor formally in God, whose essence is immixt and immutable ; anger and fury are given to God, when he manifests by his actions that something displeases him, and especially when he punisheth the creature, they are effects from God, not affections in God ; *Isa. 27.* 1. *fury is not in me.*

*Deo furor & ira
tribuitur cum
offendit saluti
aliquid sibi displice-
re; maxime au-
tem irasce dicitur
cum peccata iusti-
gunt, Rivet in
Exod.*

Be accomplished.

The Hebrew is to finish, to perfect ; as in *Gen. 2.* 2. *God ended his*

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his work, he accomplished what he was about; so here, the Septuagint hath it, *shall be perfected*; it notes a progress in Gods wrath, which shall not cease in the mid-way, but go on to the highest degree; as men when they are much incensed, proceed in punishment of Delinquents, till they be satisfied; they let out their wrath to the full, and so God would do. Formerly God had kept in his wrath; nor let it have the reins, nor break over the banks, and if it did get loose at any time, and break out, he quickly called it back, and turned it away, *Psal. 78. 39.* but now he would stir up all his wrath, and let it out to the full, and accomplish it among them; now plague, famine, sword, dispersion should have their will and power over them, God would inflict what he had conceived and threatened against them.

I Will cause my fury to rest upon them.

That is, God would terminate, fasten, settle his wrath upon them, not cease it from them, it should not fleet or move, but abide; they should be a people under fury, a generation of his wrath, *Ier. 7. 29.* a people of his wrath, *Isa. 10. 6.* God would shoot his arrows into them, and they should stick in their sides, whither ever they went, Gods fury should be still upon them; it notes out the continuation of Gods anger, which *Jeremiah* expresseth to the full, *Chap. 7. 20.* *Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man and beasts, upon the trees of the field, upon the fruit of the ground, and it shall burn and not be quenched; neither their tears nor their blood shall put out the fire of divine wrath kindled against them, it should still burn, notwithstanding all means used to quench the same.* God would make his wrath a biding wrath; such is that speech in *Isa. 30. 32.* *In every place where the grounded staf shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, which the Lord shall cause to rest upon him* is the Hebrew. What's the grounded staf? the wrath of God intended to be fixt, laid in, and laid down for a foundation of ruine, that wrath would God cause to rest upon him, that is, the *Assyrian*; the mark of the staf should be in their flesh and state for ever. *I will be comforted, God is the God of all comfort,* *2 Cor. 1. 3.* yet he saith, he will be comforted; not that God was enfeebled through discomfort, and needed addition of comfort and strength from any creature, but it's spoken after the manner of men,

men, God had mourned over them a long time; expressed his grief by the Prophets threatnings, by lesser judgements inflicted, they had done no good, and now he would ease himself of them and be comforted. Wicked men are a burthen to God, and when a burthen is taken off, it's ease, its comfort; *Isa.* 1. you have God brought in much grieved, and complaining of this people, *verse* 2, 3, 4, &c. and in *verse* 24. he saith, *Ah! I will ease me of mine Adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: Ah! the time is now come, and I am glad of it, that I shall be eased of this great burthen, bearing with this rebellious people; I will cast them off, and revenge my self upon them: revenge is sweet, its an ease to reproched, provoked spirits; for where is anger, there is grief and desire of revenge, which obtaining, takes away grief and anger, whereby the mind is comforted: therefore God would ease himself by avengement on them: So here, God would accomplish his anger, settle his fury upon them, and be comforted in it; he would execute severe judgements, and approve, yea applaud them being executed.*

Assuantem animam vindicta levat.

In my zeal.

These words are oft in the Prophet; the Hebrew signifies sometimes zeal, sometimes jealousy: the *Septuagint* renders it *in my zeal*, not *in my jealousy*. Zeal is the intention of all affections; it notes,

1. The earnest love of God for the good of his Church, and his own glory, *Isa.* 9. 7.

2. Jealousie, which is with great indignation and grief, *Num.* 25. 11. such as amounts to hatred and enmity, *Isa.* 59. 17. God was very zealous of the good of his people, and therefore gave them zealous Prophets, by whom his zeal was made known; the Prophets spake in Gods Name, delivered their message with authority, power, life; they lifted up their voices, told the people of their sins, reproved them sharply, were very zealous in their Prophesies; hence they were counted factious and fiery spirits, men venting their own opinions and humor: hence their labors were slighted; they lookt upon as contemptible men, not worthy to live, they did so trouble both Church and State with the things they delivered: but they shall know, that not men, but God spake, that it was not their zeal, but my zeal that they have opposed and rejected

ἐν ζήλω μου.

rejected me in my Prophets. If you referre it to jealousy, it notes out Gods taking them into Covenant to be his people; their revolt by Idolatry and other sins, and Gods jealousy upon it, who growing hot with displeasure, stake sharp and dreadfull things against this people, as a jealous husband would do against an adulterous wife.

Observ. 1. That God goes on by degrees in his wrath against a people, he did not accomplish his anger and fury at first, he began with lesser judgments, but at last came up to a perfection; before he had whipt them with scourges, now he would doe it with Scorpions; he had formerly done much, vexed them with wars, famine, plague, but never laid waste their city, ruin'd their Temple, scattered them into the four winds, as now he would do; he had in times past corrected them like a father, he would now execute them like a Judge, the drops of his wrath had done no good, now they should have the full vials, all the wrath conceived against them should be inflicted, accomplished.

2. That wrath let out against a sinful people, oft times lies long upon them; *I will cause my fury to rest upon them*, they were 70. years under Gods displeasure in *Babylon*, Gods wrath hath bin upon the *Jews* that rejected the Gospel these 1600. years, they would not be under the blessing of Christ, they are under the curse of God; his wrath abides upon them; Gods anger and fury hath rested upon *Germany* above twenty years; these kingdoms of *Ireland* and *England* are under it; fervent prayer is requisite, that God would remove his wrath, and not let it rest upon us. It's a dreadfull thing to have settled plague or war amongst us; The Barons wars in King *John's*, *Henry* the third's, and *Edward* the second's dayes, made sad times, Gods wrath rested then for a long season upon this kingdome, the choicest blood of it was let out, and it brought a deplorable condition. Let us repent and reform, that wrath may not rest upon the kingdome; and let us believe, that wrath may not abide upon us, *Ioh* 3. 36. *He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him*: man came into the world a childe of wrath, an heir of wrath, Christ is a remedy propounded for removal of that wrath, if men believe not, the wrath of God abides still on them, goes along with them, and will eternally sink them.

3. God takes pleasure in executing judgment, in accomplishing

ing his wrath, and causing his fury to rest upon impenitent and incurable sinners he will be comforted in it: *Prov. 1. 26. I will laugh at your calamity; God would bring calamities upon them, just judgements for the setting at naught his counsels, refusing his reproofs, and rejoyce in them; for as judgements are satisfaction to divine justice, they are delightfull unto God, Isa. 30. 32. in every place where the grounded staffe shall passe which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with Tabrets and Harps: when God should destroy the Babylonians and Assyrians, it should be with delight, which the Tabrets and Harps expresse, which were musical Instruments, used in Wars and Victories, Exod. 15. 20. And when God executed judgement upon spiritual Babylon, Rev. 18. 20. it was with joy; therefore the Spirit of God calls for it, Rejoyce over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you and himself on her also, which was a comfort and ease, a delight to God; hence judgements in Scripture are term'd his pleasure, Isa. 46. 10, 11. I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the East, and Chap. 48. 14. He will do his pleasure on Babylon.*

4. The Word of God may be preached among a people, and they through ignorance and malice, not know it, nor entertain it; *they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it; they conceived not that it was the word of God which the Prophets delivered, they thought them to be no more then other men, and their word humane, and therefore sleighted it; there was much affected ignorance in them, Isa. 27. 11. it's a people of no understanding; Jer. 4. 22. My people are foolish, they have not known me; and as many were blind, so many were malicious against the Prophets and their messages they brought from God: Jer. 44. 16. As for the word which thou hast spoken in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will do whatsoever thing goeth forth of our own mouth; Christ came and preached to his own, and they received him not, they neither knew him nor his doctrine, or if they did, they maliciously rejected both.*

5. That wicked men shall be convinced, and left without excuse; *they shall know that I the Lord have spoken, they eyed men and not me, they deem'd it mans voice, not heavens, but they shall find that it was the voice of God amongst them; and what can men say, when God hath spoken, and hath not been hearkened unto?*

every mouth will then be stopt; they would not know, but they shall know; they would not own my Truths, but they shall feel my judgements, and when they are upon them, then will they remember the Prophets and their words, which will be as burning coals in their bosomes; then they will see what desperate revolts they have made from God; how they are besieged with his power, and cannot escape the stroke thereof; when men shall see it's the infinite, great and glorious God that they have sleighted, in the Prophets, in the Ordinances, then they will be struck dumb, and fall under the wrath of that God.

6. God will justifie his servants in their zealous labors for him: *They shall know that I have spoken it in my zeal*; it's God speaks in the Prophets; it's his zeal they expresse; let men be zealous against sin, the iniquities of the times, they are counted mad, fiery fellows, troublers of *Israel*, seditious, factious, &c. *Paul* was a zealous man, and not only *Festus* an Heathen counted him mad, *Act.* 26. 24. but even the Christian *Corinthians*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 13. thought him besides himself; and such conceits had the people of Christ, who was a man of zeal, they thought him too hot, that his zeal was beyond his judgement, *Mar.* 3. 21. they plainly said he was besides himself; *Michal* scofft at *David* as one of the fools for his zeal. Let the world passe what censure it will upon Gods Ministers, God will justifie those who are sincerely zealous, and count their zeal his zeal.

7. That the Lord is intense, and will not recall his indignation, when he deals with unfaithfull, covenant-breaking persons; as in Gods zeal there is intense love towards his Church (when God promises mercy to his people, it's seal'd with this, *The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do it*, 2 *King.* 19. 31.) so here is intense hatred, wrath against his enemies, therefore God beats them off from their own inventions in the second command by this consideration, that he is a jealous God, and his jealousy extensive to the fourth generation; and *Deut.* 32. 22. saith God, *A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains;* and what's the reason of this indignation? it's given in *verse* 21. *they have moved me to jealousy With that Which is not God;* when God is in his jealousy, he speaks dreadfull things, and doth answerably; to speak in zeal, is to decree an irrevocable bloody sentence:

Hence

Hence, *Job. 24. 19. he is a jealous God; and then followes, and will not forgive your transgressions: and Deut. 29. 20. The Lord will not spare, his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses in this Book shall lie upon that man; What man? the man that breaks covenant with God, going out to false worship, and thereby putting him into jealousy, which as it's the rage of a man, and makes him cruel in the day of vengeance, so it's the rage of God, and makes him without pity. or mercy, when he executes vengeance, he will then accomplish his wrath, and not spare, powre out all his wrath and vengeance.*

VER. 14, 15.

Moreover I will make thee waste, and a reproach among the Nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that passe by.

15. So it shall be a reproach and taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that are round about thee, when I shall execute judgement in thee, in anger and fury, and furious rebukes; I the Lord have spoken it.

IN the 14th Verse are two judgements more laid down, desolation and reproach; this last is aggravated from the extent of it, *to the nations round about, and all that passed by.*

In the fifteenth you have the repetition of the last judgement, and the ends of both annexed, which are:

First, for information.

Secondly, for astonishment.

I will make thee waste.

That is, *Jerusalem*, with the Villages and all the land adjacent: *Judah* was a fruitful land, *Isa. 5. 1. the glory of all lands, flowing with milk and honey, Ezek. 20. 6. Moses* calls it a good land, a land of brooks, waters, fountains, deeps, that spring out of vallies and hills, a land of Wheat and Barley, Vines, Fig-trees, Pomgranats, a land of Oil, Olives and honey; a land where nothing was lacking, the stones of it were iron, and in the hills was brasse, *Deut. 8. 7, 8, 9. it was the Lords land, Hos. 9. 3. Immanuel, Isa. 8. 8. a land that God cared for, and watched over all the year long, Deut. 11. 12. Egypt* was an inconsiderable land to this, *vers. 10. that was*

prophane, this was the holy land, *Zach.* 2. 12. the pleasant land, *Zach.* 2. 14. it was well built, well till'd, and greatly peopled; yet this land must be laid waste; they should be in *aviditatem*, like a river dried up, that if you look for water in it, there is none; so if look for a Temple, Worship or Ordinance, &c. in *Jerusalem*, there is none; their cities and habitations are burnt, their gardens unfenced, their trees cut down; their Vines undressed, their fields untill'd, and all made a wilderness, a land of bryars and thorns, *Isa.* 7. 24. And this was fulfill'd, as you may see in *Nehem.* 2. 17. *Lam.* 1. 4. *The ways of Sion do mourn, because none come to their solemn feasts: 2. 2, 3, 5. 18.* and the adversaries hand was upon all her pleasant things; *Lam.* 1. 10. Hence the Church complains, *Isa.* 64. 10, 11. *Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation, our holy and beautiful house where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste; see here the truth of divine threats, and the mischief of sin, it so exasperates God, that he turns a fruitful land, even his own land, into barrenness, salt-ness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, Psal.* 107. 34.

A reproach among the Nations.

God would make them not only for a waste, but also for a reproach: *Charaph* is simply to reproach, to disgrace, and that's not all they should have, but they should be for a taunt also, and that's more, *נִחַשׁ* from *Giddeph* to blaspheme, revile, and so it's used, *Mat.* 27. 39. for *Matthew* writ his Gospel in Hebrew, where it's said, they reviled Christ, and wagged their heads, so should this people be reproached and revild, have bitter taunts and sarcasms thrown at them, *Ier.* 24. *They shall be removed to all Kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach, a proverb, a taunt and a curse; hence grew those reproaches and imprecations; Let it be with thee, as it was with Zedekiah his family and followers; and Ier.* 29. 22. the curse in the captivity was, *The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the King of Babylon roasted in the fire; this judgement was very sore, reproaches and taunts are bitter things, piercing deep, scarce any thing afflicts an ingenuous spirit more than they do; Zedekiah fear'd nothing more than reproach and mocking, Ier.* 38. 19. *I am afraid, lest the Jews fall to the Chaldeans, deliver me into their hand, and they mock me; it was a sad thing to be stript of all their cities, the land to be laid waste, but much more to be expos'd to scorn; yea, publicly*

לחרפה

לחרפה

Vide de Dieb. in
Mat. 28.

*Plaga Zedekia
tangat is, sit frater
et servus Zede-
kia, Vatab.

publicly of all, and that by the appointment of the Judge, even God, whom they took to be their friend, and that to the nations they had hated, and held tributary many years, this was exceeding pungent, especially they being the top and glory of all nations; it was fulfilled, *Lam. 2. 15, 16. All that passe by, clap their hands at thee; they hisse and wag their head at the daughter of Ierusalem, saying, Is this the citie that men call, The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth? All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee; they hiss and gnash their teeth, they say, We have swallowed her up, certainly this is the day that we looked for: We have found, we have seen it, The Lord hath done that which he had devised, he hath fulfilled his Word.*

An instruction.

The Vulgar is, *Exemplum*, this act of God upon *Ierusalem* exposed so to reproach, should be an example to the Heathen: The Hebrew is *musar* from *jasar*, to bind, to discipline, to instruct; the judgements of God upon his people, are *vincula*, bonds, to bind up Heathens from their sins; they are *disciplina*, reproofs unto them, being guilty of great sins; they are *mandata*, instructions to teach them to repent of their sins; because the *Iews* by their holy lives did not excite the nations to inquire after, and serve the true God, therefore their judgements shall be their instructions, teach them to fear and forsake their Idolatry; they could reason thus, If God spared not the holy city, the holy people, the holy land when they fell to Idolatry, uncleanness, and other vile sins, how will he spare us, if we be found in the same waies? his judgements are exceeding dreadful; we will take warning, their sufferings shall be our safety; if judgements were to be instructions to Heathens, and wrought upon them, shall they not much more be so to Christians? the ruins of *Germany*, the blood of *Ireland*, the breaches of *England*, let them be instructions unto us. Let us all say with *Isaiah 26. 8, 9. In the way of thy judgements, O Lord, have we waited for thee, the desire of our souls is to thy Name, and to the remembrance of thee: with my soul have I desired thee in the night. yea With my spirit Within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* Heathen inhabitants will do it, and shall not Christians? it's seasonable wisdom to learn by the blows of others.

An astonishment.

Not for stupifying and hardning, which sometimes is the end and fruit

fruit of judgements, but for admiration; God would so deal with *Ierusalem* and her inhabitants, that the nations round about should be astonished at his dealings; God would *make them an astonishment, an hissing, & a perpetual desolation*, Jer. 25. 9. yea, the plagues of the city should be such, that every one that passeth by, should be astonished, and hisse, Jer. 19. 9. yea many nations should say, *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus to this great city?* Jer. 22. 8. *Deus* 29. 22, 23, 24. God saith, The plagues of that land should be such, as that it should be like *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, so great, so strange, that all nations should say, *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?* God might have done thus with this great city, with this pleasant land, but he hath spared us, and we have cause to be as much astonished at his mercies, as they were at his judgements: Let us fear, reform, lest our sweet mercies be turn'd into astonishing judgements.

When I shall execute judgement in thee in anger and fury, and furious rebukes.

There is mention of executing judgement in ver. 8. 10. and here in this verse with addition of *anger, fury, and furious rebukes*; the Prophet may seem too repititious and verbous, but it's otherwise repetitions of the same thing serve to confirm the truth of the matter, to shew the speed of the event, and to excite the minds of those the things concern, all which fall in here: the Prophet prophesying against the *Jews* at *Ierusalem*, their city, state, and threatening destruction to all, himself keeping in *Babylon*, conceived that they would not beleieve what he said, and fear what he threatned, neither affected with what he delivered; to prevent these evils, he repeats the thing oft, and strengthens it with variety of words, that so his doctrine might be the more weighry, the sooner beleaved, they awakened, and the judgement that was at hand feared.

In furious rebukes.

The Hebrew is, *in rebukes of heat*: Pradus observes, that *jasach* notes *rebuking before witnesse*, and God would do it before the nations, and these rebukes were not to cure, but to destroy.

I the Lord have spoken.

Left they might think the Prophet and his prophecy might dy together, and come to nothing, the Lord tels them, it was himself spake, and

and that the Prophecy should take place, what ever became of the Prophet, because it was from him who was the living God, and would see it fulfilled at *Ierusalem*, though uttered in *Babylon*.

VER. 16.

When I shall send upon them the evil arrow of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I wil send to destroy you, and I wil increase the famine upon you, and break your staffe of bread.

I Have spoken of famine and breaking the staffe of bread, in *Ch. 4.* 16. Only I shall open unto you, that expreffion, *The arrows of famine*; they are either the arrows that bring famine, or the arrows that famine brings. The arrows that bring famine are great droughts, Palmer-worms, Locusts, Canker-worms, Caterpillers, thunder, lightning, winds, storms, immoderate rains, great hails, long frosts, murrains, transportations of commodities, monopolizing, hoording up of creatures, wars, &c. many of these are shot down from heaven by God, and all are sent from God, and cause famine, and they are call'd arrows, for that they do the corn, cattell, fruits, and State where they are, what arrows do to the bodies of man or beast, wound disquiet, consume; hence, when mention is made of a famine in *Habakkukes daies*, *ch. 3.* 11. the Lord is said to march through the land in indignation, *vers. 12.* and his bow to be made quite naked, then did God shoot amongst them the arrows of famine.

The arrows famine brings, are leanness, faintness, sickness, loathsomeness, frettings, fears of death, longings for death, gnawings of the stomach, pinching of the wind got into the bowels, eating of their own flesh, thirsting and burning heat, &c. these are arrows that famine brings, and kill like arrows shot into the liver, which wounding deeply, pain greatly, and kill quickly; and in this sense I rather take it here, because the judgement spoken of concerning the *Jews*, who were to be besieged, if it be taken in the other sense, it would have been a judgement to the besiegers, who lay in the field, and were not so well fortified against those arrows, as they within; it is therefore meant of the arrows famine brought upon them chiefly, not excluding the arrows brought that famine, namely war, and these arrows were prepared in *Moses days*, *Deut. 32. 23.* *I wil heap mischief upon them, I wil spend mine arrows upon them; and what arrows? They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning coals, and with bitter destruction, vers. 24.*

Famine

Famine is like a multitude of hot coals in a mans bowels and bones, that cause grievous pain, *even bitter destruction*; and therefore they are call'd here, *the evil arrows of famine*, because they bring many evils, and at last a miserable death; this *Jeremiah* acknowledges made good, *Lam. 3. 12, 13.* speaking in the person of the Church and State; *He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow; he hath caused the arrow of his quiver to enter into my reins.*

VER. 17.

So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee, and pestilence and blood shall passe through thee, and I will bring the sword upon thee: I the Lord have spoken it.

Here is a repetition of the former judgement, only one is new, & that is, *evil beasts*; some would have it meant of the *Chaldeans*, that were like evil beasts, that with their horns, teeth, heels & hoofs, should tolle, gore, rend and devour them: others understand it literally, for *evil and wild beasts*, Lions, Bears, &c. which were threatned, *Deut. 32. 24. I will send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of the Serpents of the dust, Lev. 26. 22. I will send wild beasts which shall rob you of your children, destroy your cattle, make you few in number, and your high way desolate:* see the truth of it. *2 Kin. 17. 25.* Lions were sent that slew them, they feared not God. But this was past, and our Prophet speaks of that was to come. Know then, that as God sent Lions to destroy them there, so he could send Lions to destroy them in *Babylon*. Besides those Eastern countries were not without Lions, *Daniel* was put into the Lions den; and certainly there were Lions, and other evil beasts to make good what was threatned, whensoever divine pleasure would.

I the Lord have spoken it. They looked at *Ezekiel* as a meer man, and what ever he threatned, yet it could do little, and therefore were like to regard neither him nor his Prophecy. To prevent this, and to add the greater weight to the Prophecy, the Lord takes all upon himself, and saith, It is not *Ezekiel*, but I that am *Iehovah*, who gave being to all creatures, and will give being to my Word, *It is I the Lord have spoken it.* Here the Lord subscribes his own Name, acknowledges all his, and that is enough to make all authentike. This Lord, who is dreadfull in threatnings, mighty and faithfull in execution of threats, let all the world fear and give glory unto, before he cause darknesse.

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